The Evolution of the British Isles in Early Maps

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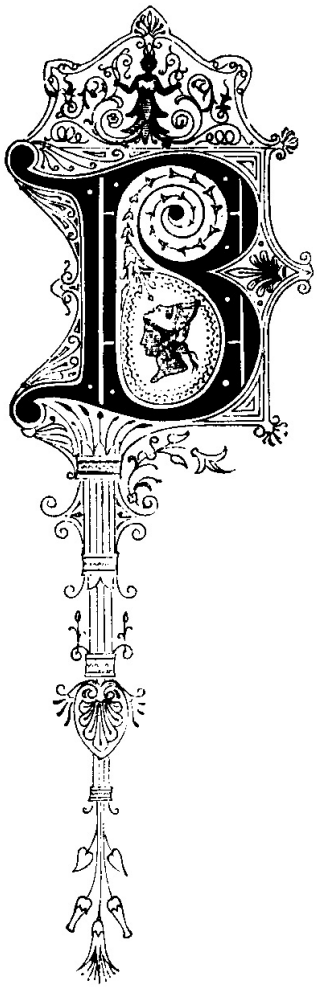


Background: The terminology of the "British Isles" refers to the various words and phrases that are used to describe the different (and sometimes overlapping) geographical and political areas of the islands of Great Britain, Ireland, and the smaller islands that surround them. The terminology is often a source of confusion, partly owing to the similarity between some of the actual words used, but also because they are often used loosely. In addition, many of the words carry both geographical and political connotations that are affected by the history of the islands. The British Isles is a group of islands in the Atlantic Ocean off the coast of continental Europe. It includes Ireland, Great Britain (England, Scotland and Wales), the Isle of Man, the Shetland, Orkney, and thousands of smaller islands. Traditionally the Channel Islands are included, though these specific islands are geographically closer to mainland continental Europe, being positioned off the French coast of Normandy. In total, there are about 136 permanently inhabited islands in the group, the largest two being Great Britain and Ireland. Great Britain is to the east and covers 83,700 sq mi. Ireland is to the west and covers 32,590 sq mi. The largest of the other islands are to be found in the Hebrides, Orkney and Shetland to the north, Anglesey and the Isle of Man between Great Britain and Ireland, and the Channel Islands near the coast of France. The full list of islands of the British Isles includes over 6,000 islands, of which 51 have an area larger than 7.7 sq mi.

The earliest known references to the islands as a group appeared in the writings of sea-farers from the ancient Greek colony of Massalia. The original records have been lost; however, later writings, e.g. Avienus' *Ora maritima*, that quoted from the Massaliote Periplus (6th century BC) and from Pytheas' *On the Ocean* (325–320 BC) have survived. In the first century BC, Diodorus Siculus has *Prettanikē nēsos* [the British Island], and *Prettanoi* [the Britons]. Strabo used *Βρεττανική* (Brettanike), and Marcian of Heraclea, in his *Periplus maris exteri*, used αἱ *Πρεττανικαί νῆσοι* [the Prettanic Isles] to refer to the islands. Historians today, though not in absolute agreement, largely agree that these Greek and Latin names were probably drawn from native Celtic-language names for the archipelago. Along these lines, the inhabitants of the islands were called the *Πρεττανοί* [*Priteni* or *Pretani*]. The shift from the "P" of *Pretannia* to the "B" of *Britannia* by the Romans occurred during the time of Julius Caesar.

Another term associated with the British Isles is the *Cassiterides* [Tin Islands, from Greek κασσίτερος, kassíteros "tin"], which are an ancient geographical name of islands that were regarded as situated somewhere near the west coasts of Europe. Herodotus (430 BCE) had vaguely heard of the *Cassiterides*, "from which we are said to have our tin," but did not discount the islands as legendary. Later writers — Posidonius, Diodorus Siculus, Strabo and others – call them smallish islands off the northwest coast of the Iberian peninsula, which contained tin mines or, according to Strabo, tin and lead mines. A passage in Diodorus derives the name rather from their nearness to the tin districts of northwest Iberia. Ptolemy and Dionysios Periegetes *(#117)* mentioned them –

the former as ten small islands in northwest Iberia far off the coast and arranged symbolically as a ring, and the latter in connection with the mythical *Hesperides*. The islands are described by Pomponius Mela *(#116)* as rich in lead; they are mentioned last in the same paragraph he wrote about Cadiz and the islands of Lusitania, and placed in *Celtici*.

At a time when geographical knowledge of the West was still scanty, and when the secrets of the tin trade were still successfully guarded by the seamen of *Gades* [modern Cadiz] and others who dealt in the metal, the Greeks knew only that tin came to them by sea from the far West, and the idea of tin-producing islands easily arose. Later, when the West was better explored, it was found that tin actually came from two regions: *Galicia*, in the northwest of the Iberia, and Devon and Cornwall in southwest Britain. Diodorus reports: "*For there are many mines of tin in the country above Lusitania and on the islets which lie off Iberia out in the ocean and are called because of that fact the Cassiterides.*" According to Diodorus tin also came from Britannia to Gaul and thence was brought overland to Massilia and Narbo. Neither of these could be called small islands or accurately described as off the northwest coast of Iberia, and so the Greek and Roman geographers did not identify either as the *Cassiterides*. Instead, they became a third, ill-understood source of tin, conceived of as distinct from Iberia or Britain.

Strabo says that a Publius Crassus was the first Roman to visit the *Cassiterides*/ *Tin Islands* and write a first-hand report. This Crassus is thought to be either the Publius Licinius Crassus Dives who was a governor in Hispania in the 90s, or his grandson by the same name, who in 57–56 BC commanded Julius Caesar's forces in Armorica (Brittany), which places him near the mouth of the Loire river.

In the first century, the Roman geographer Pomponius Mela described the inhabitants of the island as *inculti omnes* and *ita magnis aliarum opum ignari* ['all uncivilized' and 'moreover ignorant of a great many other things']. Mela correlates the ignorance of Britain to the island's extreme distance from Rome and the continent, and rounds out his description by noting that the British *pecore ac finibus dites* ['are rich only in cattle and land'].

In addition, Mela's use of *finibus* for 'land' may also contain a further joke at the expense of Britain's remoteness; *finis* commonly carries connotations of limits, ends or borders. The people of Britain, therefore, were rich only in livestock and their own place on the margins.

Three hundred years later, the Roman historian Solinus repeats this sentiment, noting that for all practical purposes, the coastline of Gaul stood as the edge of the known world, while Britain represented a land beyond the periphery – *paene orbis alterius* ['almost an other world']. Such views continue through early medieval writers such as Isidore, and early native writers remained substantially invested in such views of their home.

In the sixth century, Gildas writes, *Brittannia insula in extremo ferme orbis limite circium occidentemque* ['the island of Britain lies practically at the extreme limit of the world, towards the west and the north-west']; by the eighth century Bede has softened, but not erased this perception: *Brittania Oceani insula, cui quondam Albion nomen fuit, inter septentrionem et occidentem locata est, Germaniae Galliae Hispaniae, maximis Europae partibus, multo interuallo aduersa* [Britain, once called Albion, is an island of the ocean and lies to the north-west, being opposite Germany, Gaul, and Spain, which form the greater part of Europe, though at a considerable distance from them].

The Greco-Egyptian scientist Claudius Ptolemy referred to the larger island as *great Britain* (μεγάλη Βρεττανία megale Brettania) and to Ireland as little Britain (μικρὰ Βρεττανία mikra Brettania) in his work *Almagest* (147–148 AD). In his later work, *Geography* (c. 150 AD), he gave these islands the names *Alwion, Iwernia*, and *Mona* [the Isle of Man], suggesting these may have been names of the individual islands not known to him at the time of writing the *Almagest*. The name *Albion* appears to have fallen out of use sometime after the Roman conquest of Great Britain, after which Britain became the more commonplace name for the island called Great Britain.

The earliest known use of the phrase *Brytish Iles* in the English language is dated 1577 in a work by John Dee *(#418)*. Today, this name is seen by some as carrying imperialist overtones although it is still commonly used. Other names used to describe the islands include the *Anglo-Celtic Isles, Atlantic archipelago, British-Irish Isles, Britain and Ireland, UK and Ireland, and British Isles and Ireland*. Owing to political and national associations with the word "British", the Government of Ireland does not use the term "British Isles" and in documents drawn up jointly between the British and Irish governments, the archipelago is referred to simply as "these islands".

Cartographically

There are many significant islands – Greenland, Madagascar, Sri Lanka, St Helena, Taiwan, Java, Sumatra, Tasmania, Sicily, New Guinea Cuba, New Zealand, Hawaiian, Falkland – but none of these have risen to historical significance like the British Isles. This is due primarily to their location and the people that populated them.

Ancient Period: As mentioned above, the ancient Greeks and Romans knew of the existence of the British Isles and reconstructions of the now lost cartographic efforts of ancient Greek philosophers such as Eratosthenes, Pomponius Mela and Strabo, based upon their writings, show their concept of these islands. Mela *(#116)* was writing before the Roman invasion of Britain, and has only a very rudimentary idea of its geography. *Thule* in his work does not sound like the Orkney or Shetland islands. He says it is opposite the *Belcæ*, the name that he uses elsewhere as a synonym for *Scythia*. His knowledge of the characters of Western Europe and the British Isles was clearer than that of the Greek writers, and he was the first to name the *Orcades* [Orkney Islands]. Pliny quoted Mela as an authority. Following Polybius, Strabo chose as the northern limit of the map and of the inhabited world the parallel through *Ierne* [Ireland], *"which island not only lies beyond Britain but is such a wretched place to live in on account of the cold that the regions on beyond are regarded as uninhabitable."*

During this ancient period, poetry, sometimes illustrated by maps, continued to be used as a way of memorizing and popularizing the knowledge or meaning displayed in cartographic images. Such literary sources do, however, give the impression that the educated class largely preferred to ignore new discoveries, and earlier Hellenistic concepts of geography persisted long after they had ceased to reflect up-to-date knowledge. A late example is provided by Dionysius, born in Alexandria and called "*Periegetes*" after the title of his poem *(#117)*. A contemporary of Marinus and Ptolemy *(#119)*, he composed a description in verse of the inhabited world (A.D. 124) that was long used as a school textbook. He presented the *oikoumene* [known inhabited world] as an island, sling-shaped, entirely north of the equator, extending from *Thule* [Iceland?] to *Libya* [Africa]. He did not mention either *Agisymba* or the promontory of *Prasum*. He

limited the inhabited world eastward by the river Ganges, taking into account the *Seres* [Chinese and Tibetans], but locating them much less far east than Marinus.

Reconstruction of Greek world concept 194 BC-18 AD (#112 and #115)

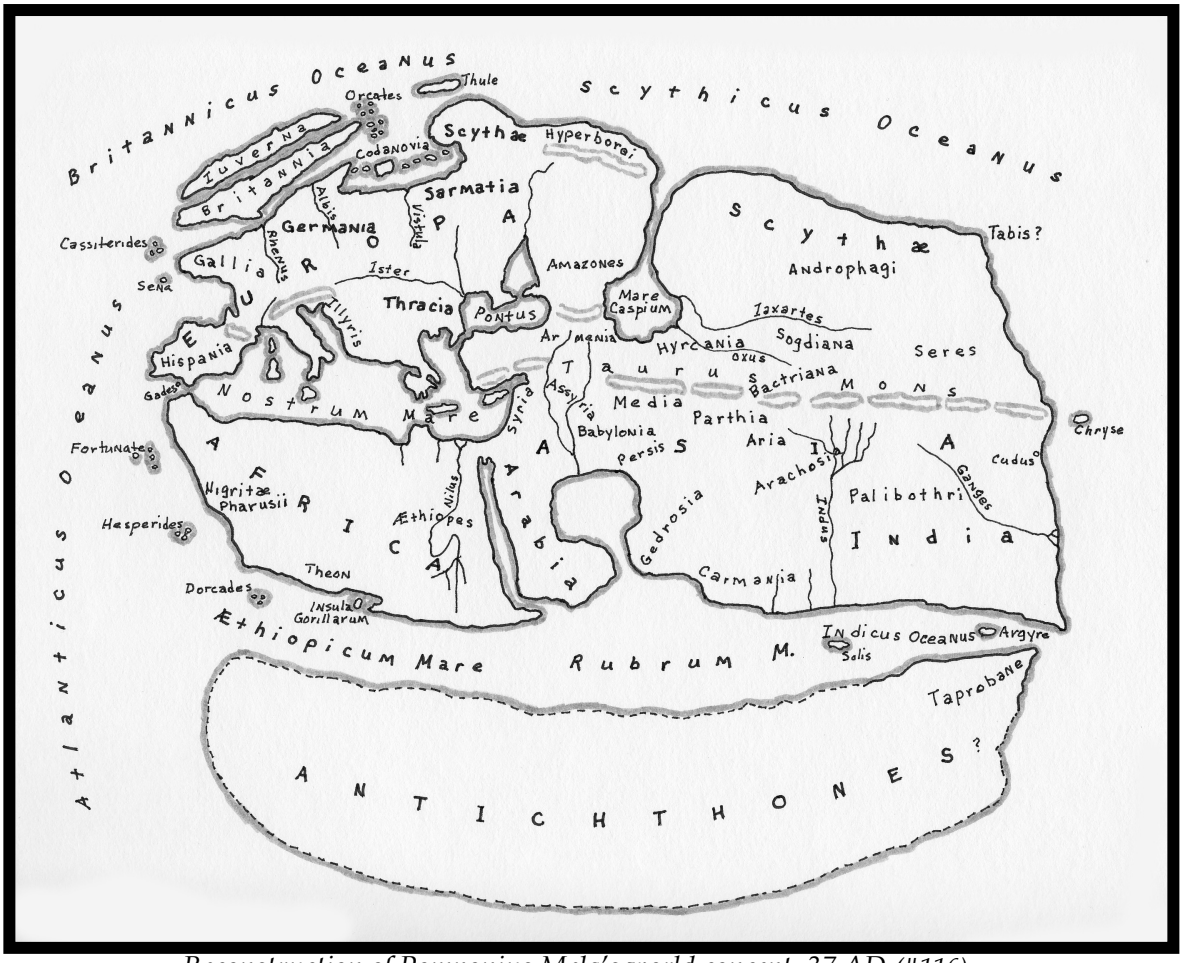
Dionysius's poem, like Aratus' *Phænomena*, was a success partly because it summarized, and made easier to remember, the array of traditional teachings since Eratosthenes. It was first translated into Latin by Rufius Festus Avienius (fourth century A.D.), and it remained in regular academic use during the whole of the Middle Ages.

The poem was originally supplied with maps, probably drawn on the models of Eratosthenes *(#112),* or Strabo's *(#115)* maps. Various annotations preserved in the margins of the existing manuscripts refer to maps illustrating the poem: some of them point out that a particular place is lacking on the map or that the outline of a specific country does not agree with Dionysius' description. These seem to provide evidence that such mapmakers continued to copy their models uncritically and rarely tried to adapt the map to the written description to be illustrated.

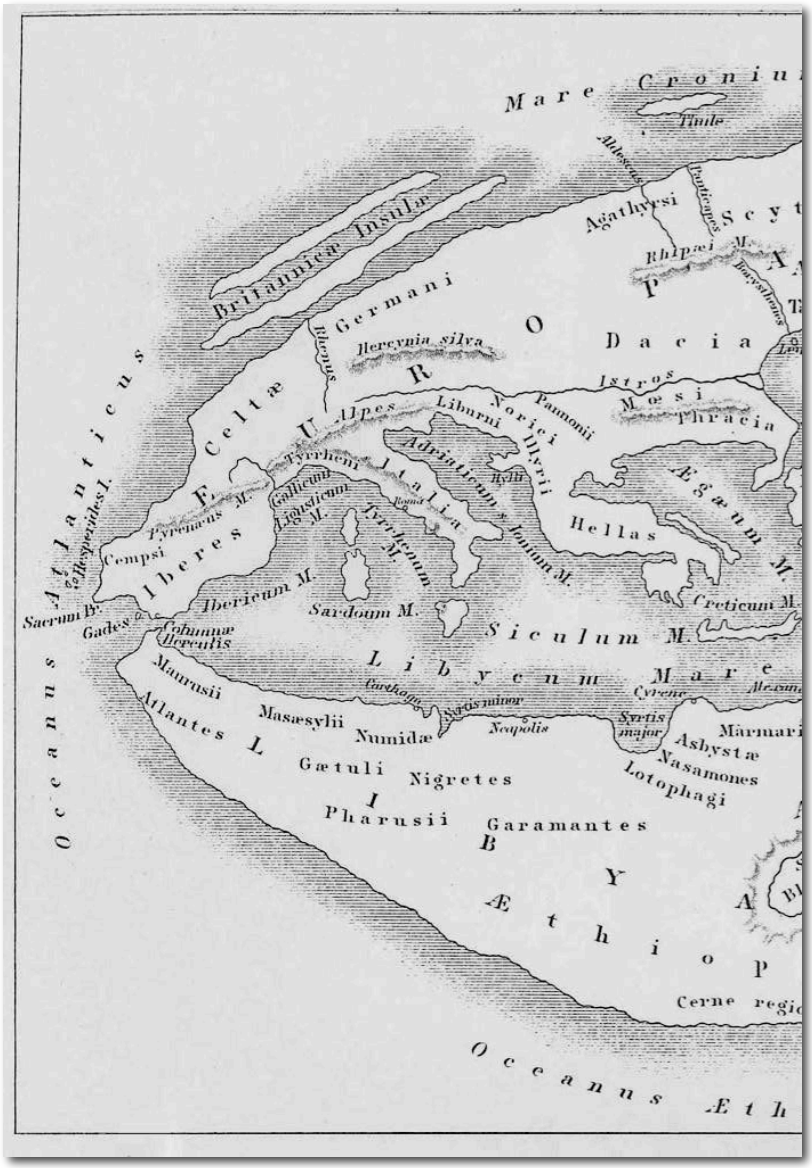
In the case of Dionysius, both maps and poems were behind their time, even at the date of their composition; but they reflect the ordinary level of geographic knowledge. His description of the British Isles may be rendered in translation as:

Two islands are there, British, off the Rhine,
By Ocean's northern shores; for there the Rhine
Sends out its furthest eddies to the sea.
Enormous is their size: no other isles
Equal the British isles in magnitude.

The British Isles as interpreted based on the writings of Strabo, 18 A.D.
on Generalis…[Strabo?] descriptio, 1550 (#115)



Reconstruction of Pomponius Mela's world concept, 37 AD (#116)

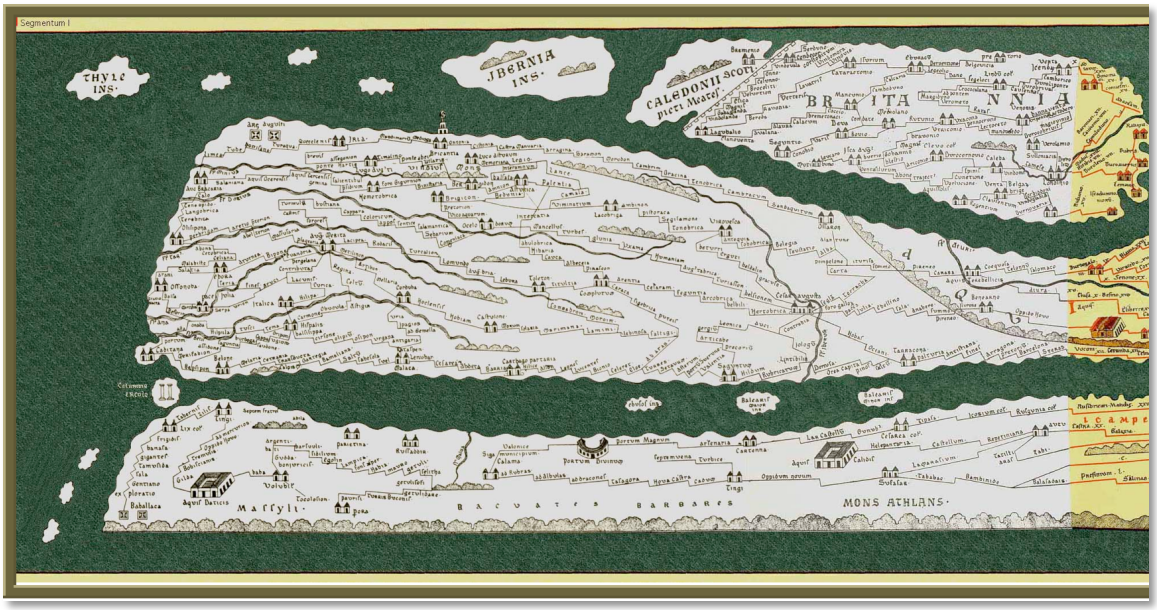


Reconstruction of a portion of Dionysius Periegetes' world map, 124 AD (#117)

Shown below are reproductions of an early first century AD road map of the imperial highways of the Roman world, covering the area roughly from southeast England to present day Sri-Lanka. Today known as the *Peutinger Table (#120),* there is no exact proportion between the representation and the actual physical elements, but rather it resembles a road map that prefers to indicate the road system marked with stopping places and the most prominent towns, while neglecting geographic elements (represented only schematically). No copies of the original have survived but a copy of it, now in Vienna, was purportedly made in 1265 by a monk at Colmar who fortunately contented himself with adding a few scriptural names, and who seems to have omitted nothing important that appeared in the original.

The part of the British section of the *Peutinger Map* that survives is so fragmentary that it covers only a limited area of the southeast, not even including

London, and an even smaller area around Exeter. Colchester, surprisingly, is given no cartographic sign. The most northerly place extant in Britain appears as *Ad Taum*, but it is very far removed from the river Tay. This name, however, really consists of the ends of *[Ven]ta [Icenor]um* (Caistor Saint Edmund, Norwich), and the only unusual feature is *ad*, which may have belonged to an adjacent name.



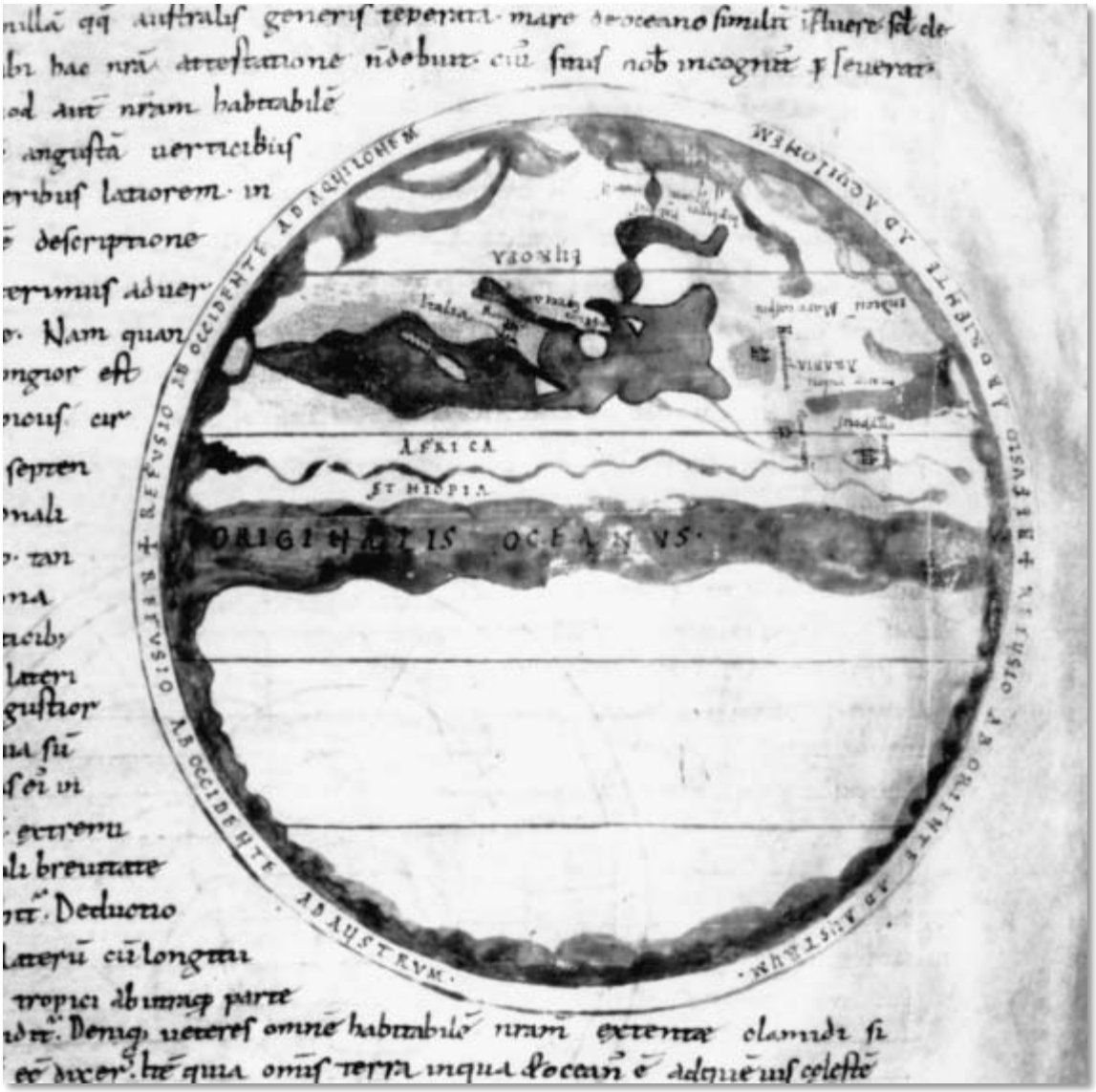
Copy of the first century AD Tabula Peutingeriana *produced by Konrad Miller in his* Itineraria Romana, *1916, where he interpolates this missing original segment that includes Britain (#120)*

Medieval Period:

During the European medieval period, maps were produced depicting the known world but not necessarily to display an accurate geographical picture. The intended purpose of these *mappaemundi* was often to depict religious and historical events and places. Geographic accuracy was not the indeed goal for thse maps. Others, like the early fifth century Ambrosius Theodosius Macrobius *(#201)* presented a global view of the Ocean in his *Commentarii in Somnium Scipionis.* In many surviving medieval manuscripts of this work, starting in the ninth century, we find maps that illustrate the following geographical ideas. The Earth is subdivided into five zones. Oceanic currents originate in the middle torrid zone. In the east and in the west each of the currents divides into one northbound and one southbound stream. The streams violent collision around the north and south poles results in ebbs and flows. Our known world thus becomes one of the four "islands" on the globe, which corresponds to the ideas of Crates of Mallos (the second century BCE, #*113)*.

In classical and early medieval definitions of *Britannia*, the territory was long defined as a cosmographic and cultural "other" to continental lands. In his *Etymologies*, Isidore of Seville *(#205),* in language closely matching Orosius, explains that Britain is an island within sight of Spain, but literally opposite Gaul: *Brittania Oceani insula . . . haec adversa Galliarum parte ad prospectum Hispaniae sita est*. Bede echoes this sentiment, noting that in relation to Spain, *Gaul* and Germany, or 'greater Europe' *(maximis Europae)* Britain stands 'at a great distance against them' *(multo interuallo aduersa).* From Isidore

and Orosius, Bede specifically preserves the term *adversa,* the word fraught not only with locative, but potentially negative connotations (e.g. refutation, misfortune, hostility or punishment) as well.



11th century manuscript of Macrobius' Commentary on the Dream of Scipio

This is unusual for the large amount of ecumenical detail in the northern hemisphere in contrast to the entirely blank southern hemisphere. Features eccentric to the tradition of Macrobius maps include the ideograms that mark certain cities (Rome, Jerusalem, Corine [?Corinth], Syene and Meroe), and the attempts to represent the British isles and the Scandinavian peninsula in the far northwest, Sicily (the triangle beneath Italy), and other Mediterranean islands. An unmarked river, presumably the Nile, extends from the Mediterranean, and surrounds Meroe; a second river extends from the Atlantic horizontally, dividing Ethiopia from Africa. (#201Y). Munich, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek Clm 6362, fol. 74r. Appendix 1, no. 23.

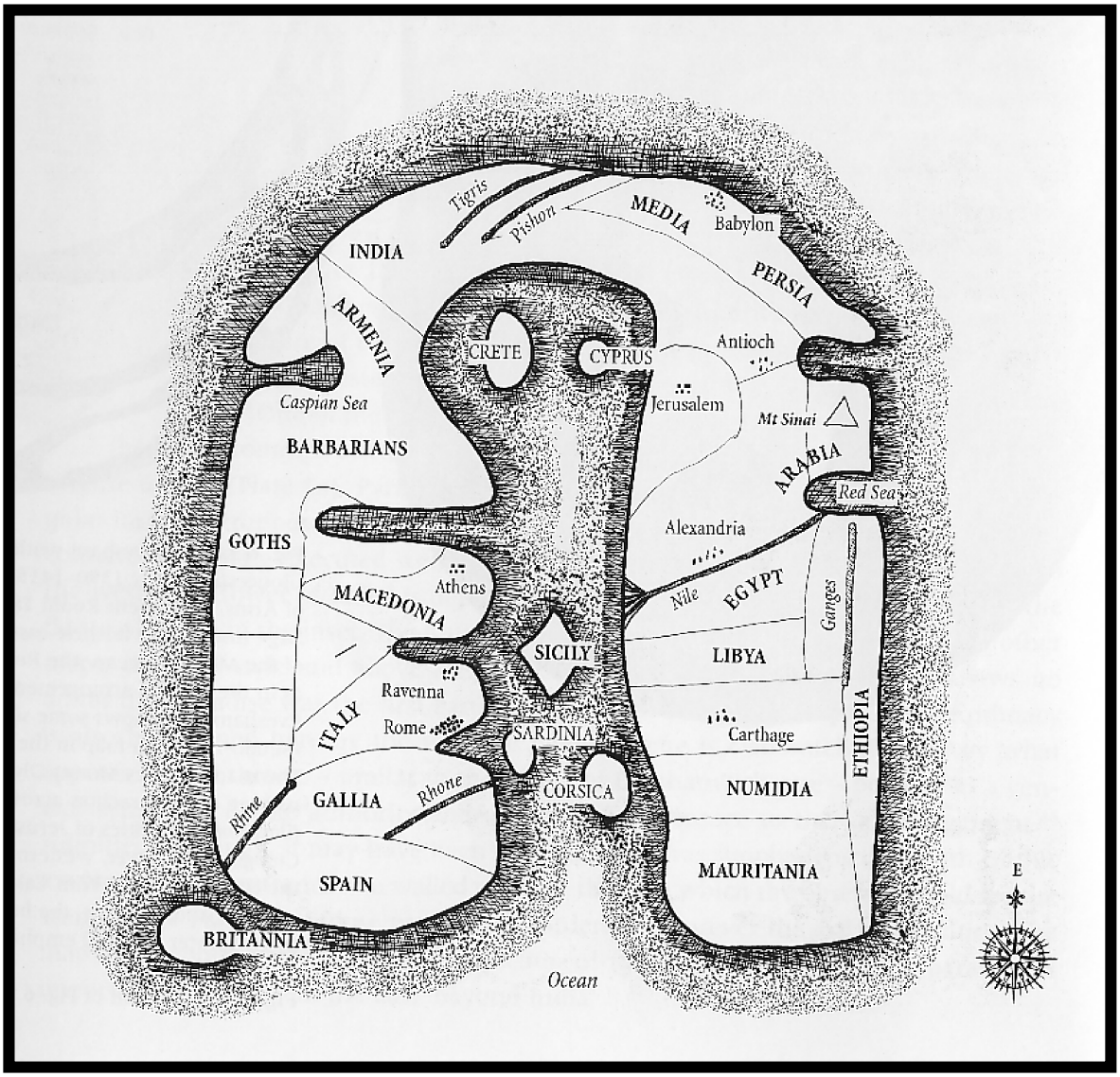
Macrobian world map, 1483, 14.3 cm diameter with the British Isles reduced to one amorphous island. The Huntington Library, San Marino, California (HEH 91528)(#201A)
The unique aspect of this Macrobius-type world map is that it is the first printed map on which ocean currents are denoted. There is a very small Africa (especially considering the date of this woodcut) and it contains the Antipodes. There are the typical five climatic zonal divisions and very simplistic castellated figures to represent major cultural centers. While no rivers are shown, the Atlas Mountains are represented by stylized drawings. Britain is represented as an amorphous island.

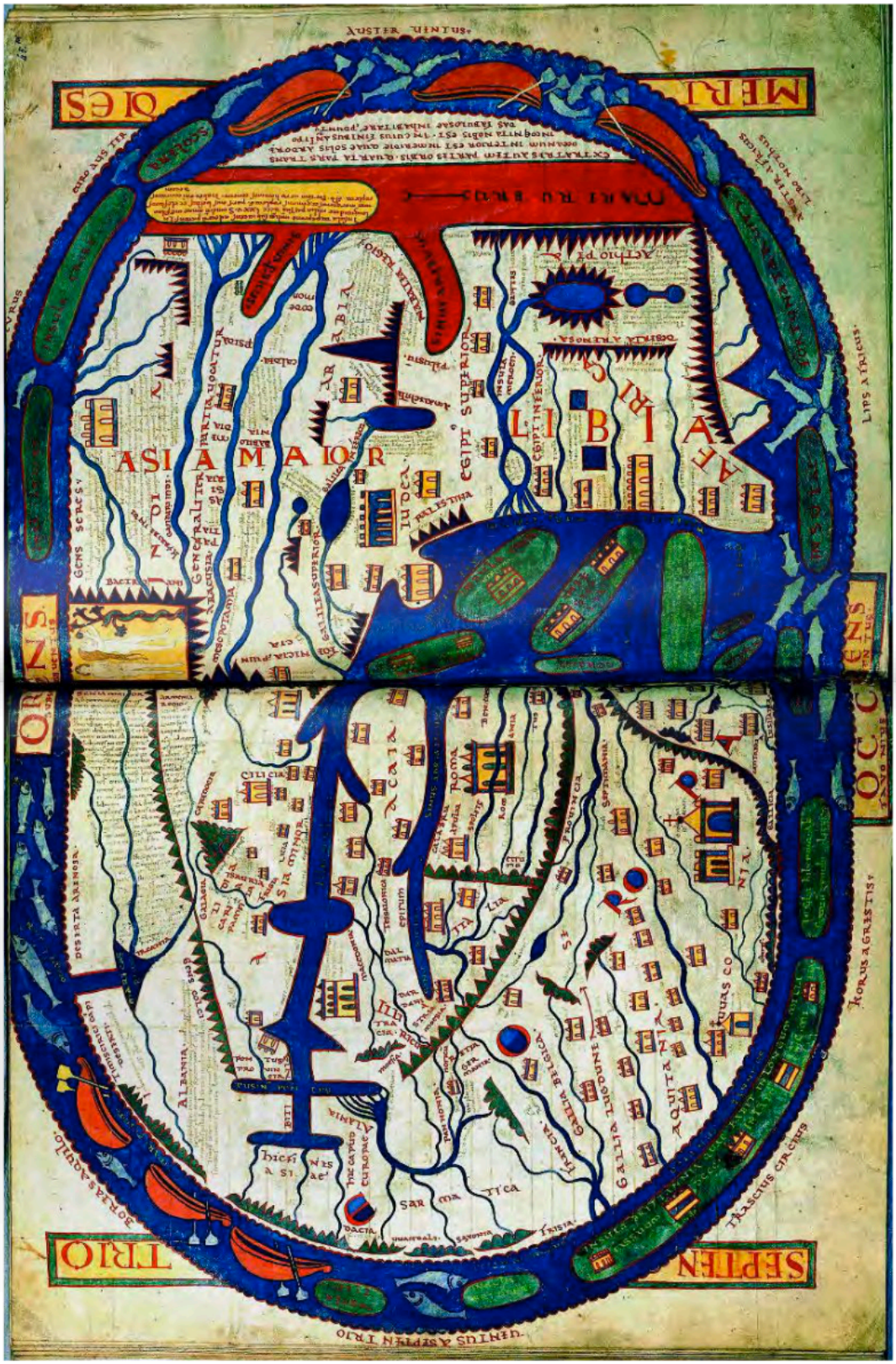
World map from a south German manuscript of Macrobius, Commentary on the Dream of Scipio, ca. 1000. The North separated from the South by an equatorial ocean-river, and each is divided into the three Greek climatic zones. Note that while most of the British Isles are missing, the Orcades [Orkney Islands] are depicted as a circular island west of the Iberian peninsula. . The designation of the southern temperate zone as "temperata antiktorum" is unusual, 11.7 cm diameter, Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS D'Orville 77, fol. 100r. (#201)

Map of Albi, 750 A.D. (#206)
Mediatheque Pierre Amalric, Albi, France, MS 29, f.57

This map, known as the *Albi* or *Merovingian* map was produced in Spain or in the southwest of France during the second half of the eighth century. The map is oriented with East at the top and incorporates only a few Christian references. The only Christian features shown on the map are the triangular *Mount Sinai, Judea* and *Jerusalem.* The four rivers of *Paradise* are shown flowing into the surrounding oceans. The habitable world is pictured as an oblong, rounded at the corners, and surrounded by the ocean. The map is

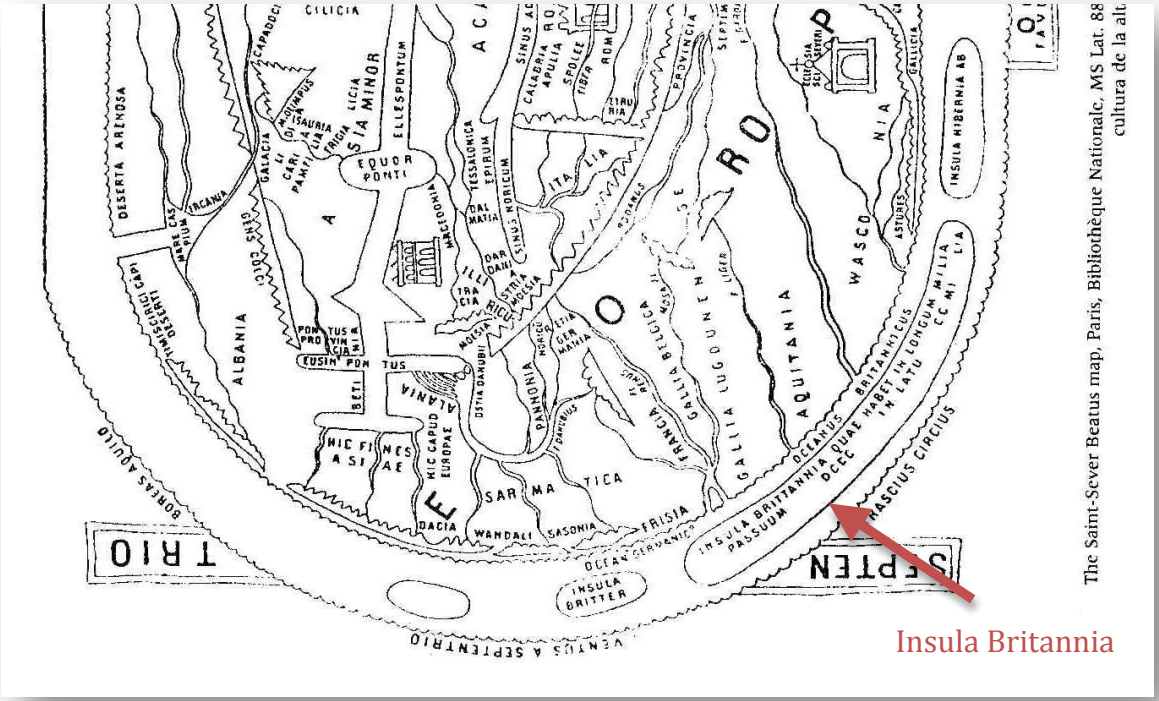
generally confined to the Mediterranean lands, or the area of the "Old Empire", and Asia is reduced to a fringe of land on the east of the Mediterranean. In the surrounding ocean *Britania* is shown as the sole island (lower left corner).





Saint-Sever a.k.a. Paris I, Beatus mappamundi, 1060, Bibliotheque Nationale, Paris, France (#207.13)

The Beatus derivative *mappamundi* referred to as the *Saint-Sever* or *Paris I*, is an oval shaped format, measures, oriented with East at the top and is the largest and most detailed map of the Beatus *mappaemundi* family. With 270 names, the Saint-Sever world map contains the most geographical detail of all the maps in the Beatus tradition and one that moves away from the Hispanic cartographic models and reveals a French identity. In the surrounding ocean are sprinkled many sausage-shaped islands including *Insula Tile*, *Insula Brittannia (Lindinio, Lindo, Uirigonio, Moriduno, Condeaco,* with the caption: *Isle of Britain, which has a length of 800 miles and a width of 200 miles)*, *Insula Argire, Insula Crise*, *Scolers, Insula, Insula Bitter, Hibernia*, *Insula Fortunatarum* (shown as two separate islands *Insula* and *Fortunatarum,* a typical way to illustrate an archipelago*)*, *Insu[la Ga]des*; and in the Mediterranean Sea: *Corsica, Maiorca, Minorica, Insula Sardinia, Insula Sicilia, Insula Creta* and *Insula Cipros*. Some of the islands (Britain and Sardinia) are labeled with their dimensions in miles in a tradition that dates back to Pliny. On these islands and on the continental landmasses are depicted castles, houses and churches of various sizes to symbolize major cities, famous sites or shrines.



The Cottoniana or Anglo-Saxon Map, c. 995, oriented with East at the top
British Library, Cotton MS Tiberius BV, f.56v (#210)

The *Cotton Tiberius* is the richly illuminated 11th century manuscript in the *Cotton* collection of the British Library and contains one of the oldest and most excellent world maps. Called the *Cottoniana* or *Anglo-Saxon* map, it dates from 995-1050, just before the

Norman Conquest, and does not appear to belong to any one of the identifiable "families" of medieval maps. In geographical content, it does follow the medieval European convention of orientation with East at the top and somewhat centered on Jerusalem. The *Cottoniana* map contains the earliest known, relatively realistic depiction of the British Isles. It was created, probably at Canterbury, between 1025 and 1050 but is probably ultimately based on a model dating from Roman times. This showed the provinces of the Roman Empire, of which *Britannia* [England] was one. The map was revised and updated in about 800 and again in about 1000. New information was added but at each stage errors and misunderstandings occurred in the copying process.

England, Scotland, Ireland, Denmark *(Neronorweci* or *Neronorroen)*, and France are better drawn on the *Cottoniana* than any other medieval map. The British Isles are prominently depicted with Ireland oriented east-west, vice north-south. Scotland is curiously twisted to the left instead of to the right, as in Ptolemy. Like most early maps, this one has East at the top. Nevertheless the British Isles (bottom left) are immediately recognizable and the Orkneys, the Scillies, the Channel Islands and the Isles of Man and of Wight are shown.

There are several names and features which show striking independence of any other known map authority of the earlier Middle Ages. Among these are five names in Britain: *Camri* or *Cambria*, and *Marinus-portus* in the northwest; *Kent, London*, and *Winchester* on the southern shore; and *Arma* or *Armagh* in Ireland; the *Sud-Bryttas* [South Bretons] in northern *Gaul*; the *Golden Mountain of the Far East* and the *Boreani* and *abundant lions* of the northeast of Asia. Major cities are represented by drawings of fortifications (London and *Armagh* (Ireland)). In addition, there are a number of unlabelled provinces, rivers and islands, leading one to surmise that this map was copied from a larger and more detailed map. The comparative excellence of the *Cottoniana* is perhaps due to its being the production of an Irish scholar-monk living in the household of the learned and traveled Archbishop Sigeric of Canterbury (992-994), with whose *Itinerary*, from Rome to the English Channel, the present design has several curious resemblances. In the British isle of the pre-Norman period, there is no school of learning art, or science comparable to that which sprang from the Irish Church of Patrick, Colomba, and Ardan; and the insertion of the name of *Armagh*, so rarely found in medieval maps, strengthens the view that there we have the handiwork of a student who was trained in Irish schools, or derived his knowledge from men so trained.

A broad similarity in coastlines with the *Hereford* map *(#226)* is clear in the *Anglo-Saxon [Cottonian] World Map*, c.1000 *(#210)*, but there are no illustrations of animals other than the lion (top left). Note also the Roman provincial boundaries, the relative accuracy of the British coastlines (lower left) and the attention paid to the Balkans and Denmark, with which Saxon England had close contacts.

According to Andrew Klein, from the earliest cartographic examples, such as this 11th century Anglo-Saxon or Cotton map *(#210),* we can note a rooted ambivalence regarding Scotland. Rather than clearly delineate the state of medieval Britain, the depiction of the British Isles on this early map, which accompanies Priscian's verse translation of Dionysius's classical work of geography *Periegesis*, unexpectedly mires us in many questions. The map's illustration of the British Isles with its strikingly accurate shape broken up along recognizable ethnic borders by fine, squiggly lines into *Brittannia*, *Hibernia*, "*moren pergas*," and *Camri* in the North, is tantalizingly exact, but ultimately ambiguous in detail. The map demonstrates a number of oddities. For one, the name *Camri* stands in place of Scotland and seems to be an equivalent to "*Cymry*," or *Cambria*

in Wales. Wales, on the other hand, receives the strange name or term "*moren pergas*," a name over which scholars are still puzzling. There were the Strathclyde Britons in the north during the 11th century, and it is possible that the cartographer here thought of the Strathclyde region as being Welsh, yet it is curious that he emphasizes the Brythonic name of the Strathclyde region at the expense of giving Wales its usual name. Alfred Hiatt observes that *Camri* appears to be a Latinization of *Cymry*, and presumably refers to Strathclyde British and Welsh. It seems likely that there is some confusion between *Cumbria*, the other 11th century name for *Strathclyde*, and *Cambria* here as well. Observing the northern reaches of the island, it becomes apparent that Scotland fades into the Orkneys as its boundaries disintegrate into a hazy landlessness, neither ocean nor island. At the time the map was made, "Scotland," as it is understood today, did not exist. Rather, a loose collective of countries under the King of Scots stood in its place, and accordingly the whole of Britannia is ambiguously unbound by the north's half-finished appearance on the Anglo-Saxon map, a failure of boundary lines not seen elsewhere on the map, and an expression of imaginative uncertainty in spatially conceptualizing the unknown and unexplored.

Detail: the British Isles, observe the coastline to the north (left) bleeding into the ocean from the region labeled cam-ri. (#*210)*

Not surprisingly, the British Isles are rather well represented in the map – the one cartographic detail that has occasioned critical comment in the past. The coastline and shape of the islands are pretty particular for the time; they contain icons of three named cities (London, Winchester and *Armagh*), and a number of delineated regions,

including named regions for Ireland *(Hibernia)* and Scotland *(Camri)*. The Orkney Islands also make an appearance, as, it seems likely, does the Isle of Man. One city in the southwest lacks an inscription, perhaps an indication of the provenance of the map or mapmaker.

What remains most startling about the map's treatment of Europe, though, is the sole inscription allowed to border England, *sudbryttas*, presumably meant to represent Brittany. The very form of the inscription reveals much about the Anglo-Saxon attitudes behind it; *sudbryttas* contains a unique use of the Anglo-Saxon "ó", one of the only distinctively Old English characters in the text of the map. The literal meaning of the inscription, 'south Britain', assumes a somewhat colonialist attitude towards Brittany, and onomastically centers the perspective of the region squarely on England. Such an attitude also references one of the first major cultural events of post-Roman Britain, namely the victory of Anglo-Saxon invaders over native Britain, and the subsequent late 5th century settlement of Bretons in southern Gaul. Thus with reference to the area of classical Gaul, or contemporary France, Normandy, Flanders, Maine and Burgundy, the map chooses to depict a period both after the fall of Rome, and before the rise of Western European political states that would by the middle of the 11th century definitively end Anglo-Saxon power. In this sense, the *mappamundi* eerily refuses to recognize the very regions that will directly enable the Norman Conquest of Anglo-Saxon England, only decades (perhaps less) after the map was made.

The *Sawley* world map, preserved in a late 12th century manuscript copy of *De imagine mundi* in Cambridge College, England, is oval in form, of small size (about 29.5 x 20.5 cm), and contains 229 legends or inscriptions, together with a large number of unnamed cities, mountains and rivers, whose titles can for the most part be ascertained with the aid of its younger relatives, the *Psalter, Ebstorf, Jerome* and *Hereford* plans *(#223, #224, #225* and *#226)*. The map has roughly 225 geographical names, including some cities or regions that are shown with an architectural symbol. The majority of these images allude to places of importance in Christianity.

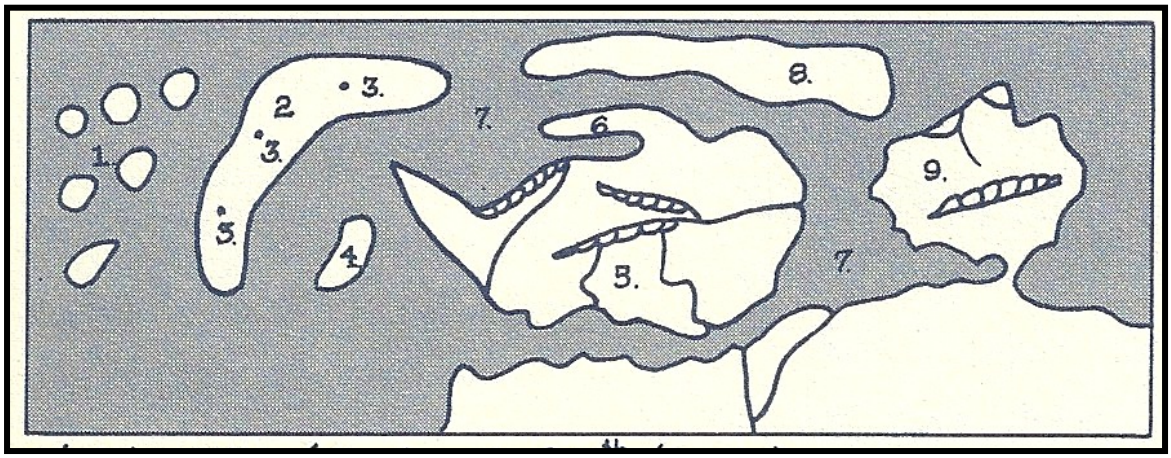
The *Sawley* map, perhaps the first *mappamundi* proper, presents an alternative, though common, way of addressing the problem of England and its northern neighbors—by simply ignoring it. The *Sawley* map, which accompanies a manuscript of Honorius Augustodunensis's cosmological work *Imago Mundi*, denudes the *Britannia insula* of almost any definable features and is almost gestural in its delineation of landmasses. Crushed against the edge of the world, *Hibernia* still receives a distinct shape, as do the Orkneys (*Orcades*) to the north.

The Sawley Map, a.k.a. World Map of Henry of Mainz, 1110, Honorius Augustodunensis/ Henry of Mainz [Mayence] (#215)

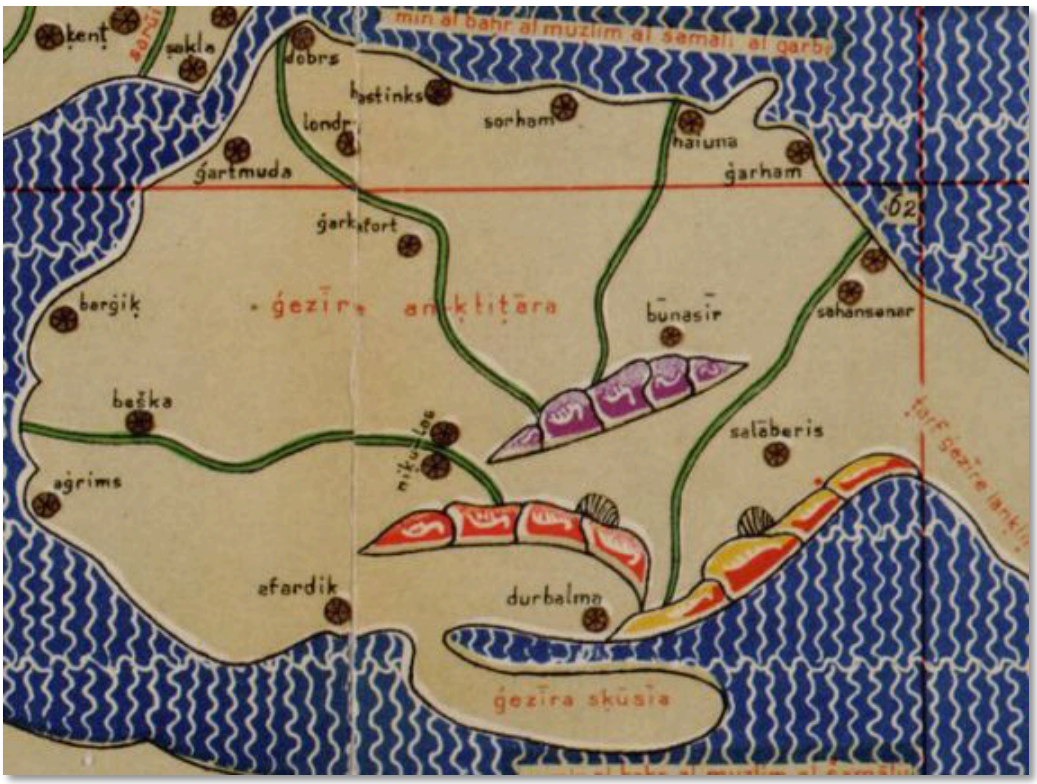
Detail of the 12th century Sawley Map. Britain is considered as a whole, here, with Britannia insula stretching across the island. Below it, hibernia and above to the left, the Orkneys (orca-des); there is no indication of Scottish presence in the north.

In the world map by al-Idrisi (below, #*219)* Britain, shown below, *is set in the Sea of Darkness. It is a considerable island, whose shape is that of the head of an ostrich, and where there are flourishing towns, high mountains, great rivers and plains. This country is most fertile; its inhabitants are brave, active and enterprising, but all is in the grip of perpetual winter.* Al-Idrisi gave the names of many English towns, principally ports, with the distances between them. Hastings was a *considerable town, densely populated, with many buildings, markets, much industry and commerce;* Dover, to the east, was *an equally important town* not far from the mouth of the *river of London, the broad and swiftly flowing Thames.* London, however, was mentioned only as *a city of the interior*.

World map by al-Idrisi, 1154, re-oriented with North at the top.
As reconstructed by the German cartographer Konrad Miller in 1927
Below, detail of the "The large Idrisi Map" showing Europe and North Africa (#219)



Islands of the Atlantic off the coast of northern Europe that were known by Idrisi:
1. *Khalie* [Empty Isles];
2. *Ghazirat Birlanda* [Ireland];
3. *Kharab* [Desert];
4. *Gals* or *Vals* [Wales];
5. *Ghazirat Angiltara* [England];
6. *Ghazirat Squosia* [Scotland];
7. *Al-bahral muslimashshamalil;*
8. *Ghazirat Islanda* [Iceland];
9. *Ghazirat Danamarkha* [Denmark].



Detail: Britain on the al-Idrisi map

Al-Idrisi's work does not support such an interpretation. The *Book of Roger*, which accompanied al-Idrisi's maps, says that Ireland, which lies west of the "deserted island" of Scotland, is a very large island. Having noted several sailing distances in those northern waters, the author then observes that it is one day's journey from Iceland to "Ireland the Great." Not only is it clear that al-Idrisi is referring again to the large island called Ireland located west of Scotland, but the travel time given equals that "from the extremity of England to the island of the Danes." An Icelandic codex from 1387 also describes Ireland as a large island, to the north of which lies another large island named Iceland. This statement leaves no room for alternative interpretations of another "island" that was supposedly North America.

In the 12th and early 13th century, the monastery of St. Albans in England possessed what may be called an historical school, or institute, which was then the chief center of English narrative history or chronicle, and with a different environment might have become the nucleus of a great university. Among the writers of this school, the greatest was a Benedictine monk Matthew Paris, whose three chief works contain various maps and plans unsurpassed in European medieval geography, before the rise of the *portolani* [nautical charts]. Thus, in the *Historia Major*, or *Cronica Majora*, we have the so-called *Itinerary to the Holy Land*, or *Stationes a Londinio ad Hierosolymam*, as well as a *mappamundi*, a map of Palestine, and the first of Matthew's four maps of England.

The four maps that Matthew Paris *(#225.2)* has left us of his native country (and especially the two examples in the Cotton Library) are the finest achievements of medieval student-geography, according to the highly critical historian Charles Beazley. All four copies appear to be from the annalist's own hand, though the two not in the Cotton Library are cruder by comparison. The Cotton form of Paris' *England* (British Library, Cotton MSS, Claudius, D.) measures 33.8 x 22.4 cm and is the best and most complete. The execution is admirable, the coloring detailed and systematic. The sea on west and east is colored green, like the inland gulfs and salt waters; rivers are either blue or red; the province divisions are marked (in some cases) in red and blue; the mountains and Roman walls (of Hadrian and the Antonines) are yellow; the legends and inscriptions are by turns red and black. To the north, however, the sea has been left uncolored. At the edges this map is somewhat bent inwards, and on the left border something has been cut away. The outlines of the coasts are, in general, admirably shown, especially the west coast, with the westward reaching promontories of Galloway, Wales and Cornwall. The east coast is less satisfactory, for neither the indentation of the Wash nor the broad eastward projection of Norfolk appear, and by some confusion a point on the coast of Suffolk is taken as the southeastern corner of Britain, with the result that the Thames is shown as debouching into the English Channel.

In the far north, the sketchy outlines of Scotland show that relatively little was known of this remote part of the island. Indeed, on two of the maps the Firths of Clyde and Forth join in such a way as to cut off *Scocia Ultra-marina* from the remainder of Britain, with which it is connected by a bridge. The courses of the main rivers, Severn, Humber, Avon, Thames, on the whole are well delineated. A large tract in the east is labeled *mariscus* to designate the Fen country, and the mountains Snowdon, Plynlimon and Cheviot appear in their correct positions. The northern Scottish Highlands are described by long legends as mountainous and woody regions that generate an uncultivated and pastoral people, inasmuch as a great part of this area is boggy and full of reeds. Argyll is a "*trackless and watery district well adapted to cattle and pasturage,*" and

South Wales is spoken of in much the same way. Among the islands off the coast we notice *Sheppey, Thanet, Wight*, possibly some of the Channel Islands, *Sephe, Thanet, Vecta, Ven, Grenese* [Guernsey], *Purland, Sulli, Lundeth, Engleseia insula, Man, Tyren insula, insula Columkilli, Orkades insule* [Portland Head, Sicily, Lundy, Anglesey, Man, Tiree, lona and, to the east of Scotland, Icolmkill or Iona and the Orkneys]. The Hebrides are conspicuously absent, and in their place a legend reads *immense and trackless sea.*

In the upper left margin of this map there is an interesting legend about sea monsters in the Atlantic. The legend, which is located off the northwestern coast of Scotland, has been damaged by trimming of the page, but reads: *[Hec] pars inter aqui[lo]nem & autrum [vas]turn mare res[pici]t ubi non est nisi [m]onstrorum habi[ta]cio. Verumtamen ibi [inve]nitur insula [an] etum fortissima,* that is, "This part between the North and South looks out on a vast sea where there is nothing but the abode of monsters. But an island is found there that has many rams". Unfortunately we do not know Matthew's source for his claim about the Atlantic, and this legend does not appear on his other three maps of Britain. This legend is paradigmatic in its placing of monsters in the furthest and unknown reaches of the world. In fact, it discourages exploration through its assertions that there is no land in the Atlantic except for an island of rams, and that the ocean is full of monsters. Thus while one of a map's primary functions is to depict the earth's geography, the allusion to sea monsters on Matthew Paris' map of Britain discourages voyages that would add to the area that could be portrayed on maps.

A large number of cities are placed more or less in their proper positions, together with the names of counties and other territorial divisions; and finally the Roman walls from Forth to Clyde and from Carlisle to Newcastle make the most prominent feature among the works of man. Here also, for the first time in Northern Europe, we have a map with the North at the top; and in this we may see a victory of revived scientific feeling over the ecclesiastical preference for the East, and of North-European feeling over the Arabic and other influence that had made the South the primary quarter of the heavens. But the Ptolemaic arrangement, here reproduced by Matthew, was also better adapted for a sketch of the long and narrow island of Britain, tapering towards the North, and hence the possible explanation of its reappearance in this map. Again, practically speaking, orientation to the East would have made Matthew's England run on to two pages of the manuscript, broken in the middle by the fold. A legend on Paris' map of Britain demonstrates how map scale could be adjusted to fit the circumstances*: "if the page had allowed it, this whole island would have been longer"*. And since the places named on his basic route are more or less equidistant on the ground - he very likely viewed them as staging points - as well as on the map, where they are simply entered one below the other without much space between, they provide a very rough basis of scale as well as relative position.

Matthew's *Claudius* map" (shown below) gives subtle yet certain indication of participating in the status of Scotland by plotting out the narrative history of the land in the same fashion as the *mappaemundi* and by alienating its northern-most neighbors. The mid-13th century map contains a wealth of information, from Gildas's dimensions of England to travelers' descriptions to a striking depiction of the many snaking waterways of Britain. As Klein describes it, the *Claudius* map is ambitious, attempting for the first time pictorially to distill a sense of region through a brilliant confluence of topographic and historic detail.

Matthew Paris map of England, 1250, a.k.a. the Claudius map, with Sterling Bridge connecting Scocia. Observe the stacking of settlements almost exclusively running up the center of the island, intercepted by the Antonine Wall and Hadrian's Wall
British Library MS Cotton Claudius D VI, fol. 12v (#225.2)

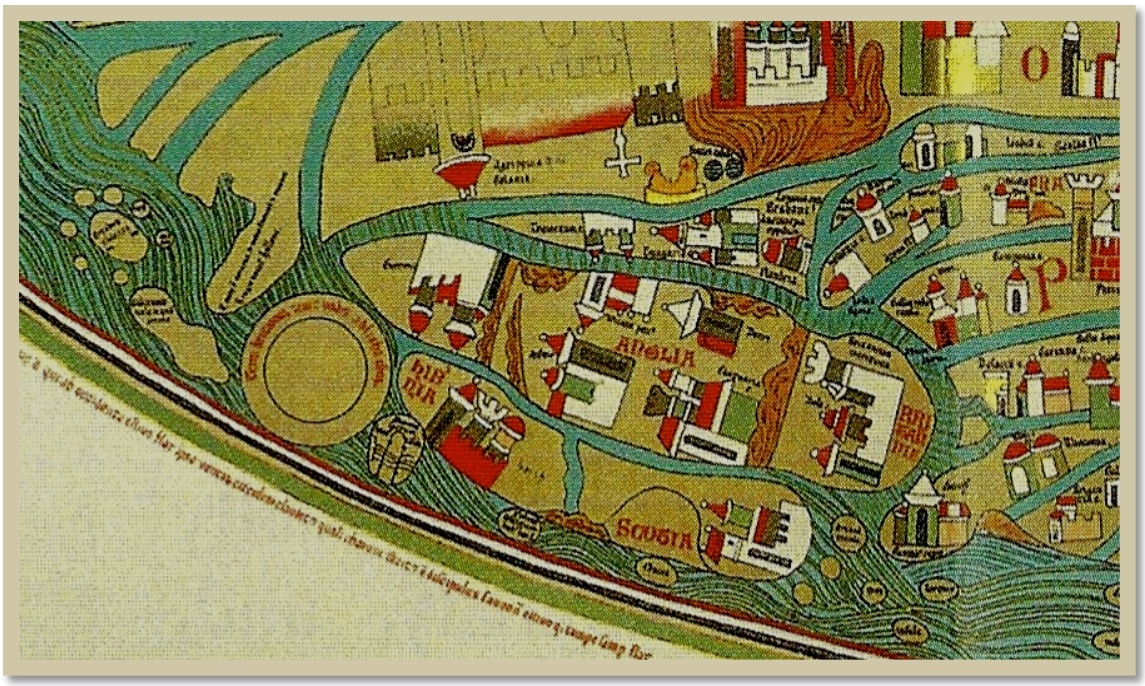
Yet, the relative placement of settlements to one another is not accurate but organized along a vertical, northern-going itinerary reminiscent of other Matthew Paris itineraries *(#225),* pulling the reader along its axis; in this detail, the map speaks of movement. As the close stacking of iconographically depicted settlements draws our eyes and thoughts unerringly north (there are scarcely any settlements elsewhere on the map but on this vertical axis), encouraging the itinerant gaze of the reader, the map calls attention, amidst its impressive variety, to the history of Anglo-Scot relations. Along the journey, we encounter Hadrian's Wall, with the phrase "the wall once dividing the Angles and the Picts," and next the Antonine Wall, "the wall once dividing the Scots and the Picts." Turville-Petre takes these walls in the Matthew Paris maps to suggest the clear beginnings of Scotland, but they do more than only that, plotting out a visual history of the expansiveness of England and emphasizing the instability of manmade borders.

Following these historical boundaries, we enter the "region of the neighboring Scots," the southern zones of Scotland that were the most contested and therefore the most familiar. But there is a different, more obvious feature of this map that separates much of Scotland. Matthew, like some others before him, over-emphasizes the Firths of Forth and Clyde, creating an isthmus between the two landmasses, the Stirling Bridge, *estrevelin pons*—a local structure that would coincidentally become the only thing preventing the English from invading in 1297. The bridge, however, has never received such attention in other medieval maps, and its inclusion discloses the logistical considerations of the cartographer. In fact, while the bridge is of emphatic significance in the *Claudius* map, in the second half of the 13th century there was no large multi-arched stone bridge, but instead a narrow "bryg of tre," hardly wide enough for a horse and cart. The map narrows our focus onto Stirling, what became widely known as the "key to the Highlands," the most important route into northern Scotland until the 20th century. The act of crossing into northern Scotland becomes important on the *Claudius* map as never before; through the depiction of this landmark, insignificant in size but vital for any exploit to the north, the itinerary of the map leads us headlong to the moment before invasion.

Proceeding north, across the bridge, we enter what Matthew has sumptuously labeled *scocia: ultra marin* [Scotland: Beyond the Sea]. This epithet exoticizes Scotland by distancing it and likening that relatively small separation of encroaching water to the separation between England and the much larger world. At the same time, the centered placement of the inscription *scocia* crowns the itinerary of the map and makes it a final destination. Within that nearly truncated landmass the cartographer observes, "A mountainous and well-wooded region, producing a people wild and rustic on account of how marshy and reedy it is." The map-maker's naming and depiction of northern Scotland emphasizes Scottish barbarity next to England at a time when the kings of Scotland, Alexander I and II, had shown themselves resistant to English demands of homage. The map visually brings into the larger English empire the most contested zones of Scotland while distancing lesser-known highland areas. Scotland's discordant nature is emphasized by geographic division, on one side of the Stirling Bridge *conterminus* with England and on the other *incultus*, a wildness that will become more emphatic in English sources as we enter the 14th century, but which already associates the Scots with other colonized peoples like the Welsh or the "bestial" Irish. The inscription just below it, "This was also called Albania," historicizes these divisions by evoking the mythic past that we find in older histories like Geoffrey of Monmouth's

Historia Regum Britanniae, emphasizing Scotland's present removal from England and a complicated past of Anglo-Scottish coexistence and separation. The cartographer similarly does this with his use of the word *olim* or "formerly" in his rubrics for the walls. According to Klein, history is written across Matthew's maps, and, far from "representing a genuine attempt at making a map in the modern sense of the term," Matthew's maps demonstrate deliberate spatial and temporal considerations that reflect the politics of his era; the map attempts to crystallize political and ethnic identities that were still in flux. And while many scholars have pointed to the cartographer's admission that his map is distorted because the page is not long enough as a testament to his appreciation for accuracy and scale, the admission also points to a self-consciousness in constructing areas like Scotland. Rather than "cavalier sacrifices made to meet the exigencies created by the format of the page," these are imaginative gestures that hint at a hierarchical understanding of the British Isles.

In Paris' *Royal* map (shown below), cartographic imaginings change as imperial ambition and determination grow in the second half of the 13th century with the advent of Edward I's reign. Even if we accept that this map is less fully articulated than Paris' others, there are significant differences that warrant comparison. What seemed a clear geographic separation in the small isthmus between the Highlands and the rest of the island has been widened, and Stirling no longer appears as an obstacle. In fact, the Highlands have become much less of a feature, as they blend more easily into the whole of the island, uniting the northern regions. The walls, markers of a past of separation, have almost vanished. Scotland now is simply *scocia* and that name has been moved south into the larger body of *Northumbria*. But more significantly the name *britannia*, as Connolly notes, has been written to spraw purposefully across the entire island. The final "A" of the name is cast across the Firth of Solway, in a possessive gesture. To drive the point home, the cartographer has written below and beside the name: "now called England, which embraces *Scocia*, Galloway, and Wales." Scholars frequently point to these words as being indicative of the map's probable Roman origins, but there is much evidence that, outside of the cartographic sphere, writers and monarchs contemporary with Matthew Paris were actively beginning to employ the term *Anglia* as an imperial political gesture, a gesture that can be seen to have become entrenched by the time Higden writes his *Polychronicon*. The *Britannia* legend embraces and emphasizes the north-south itinerary from Dover to Durham, written along either side of it, but extends the itinerary tantalizingly with the final "A" as Matthew "asks his reader to read in the direction in which he imaginatively proceeds." Britain has now become England, and Scotland is now united under that name. The significance of naming Galloway as well on this map, recalling the other Matthew Paris maps as well as the *Hereford mappamundi*, is that the map insists on the provincial status of *Scocia*. Scotland is no kingdom on this map, but a province of England, *Anglia*. Galloway, too, a region with a checkered history of changing allegiances and hybrid ethnicities, enters into a provincial status that makes it a part of a particularly English empire. These cartographic alterations come at a time when many Scots began to self-identify as such in unity before the Wars of Independence, expanding their own conception of Scotland to the "greater Scotland" encompassing lands beyond those specifically between the Forth and Moray.



Detail of the 13th century Ebstorf Map (reproduction, #224). Scotia is below and to the right, partly connected tenuously to Ireland, yet separate from Anglia.

The massive *Ebstorf mappamundi (#224)*, for example, sadly destroyed during the Second World War though preserved in meticulous copies and photographs, includes Scotland in its depiction of the British Isles. Although the map has ties to the encyclopedic work of a 13th century Englishman, the *Ebstorf* cartographer misplaces Scotia south of Ireland (*Hibernia*) to the west of *Anglia* and *Britannia*, and it is cut off from those provinces by the same ocean stream as Ireland. The odd placement of Scotland tells us that likely the *Ebstorf* cartographer was not as familiar with the British Isles as some scholars have suggested, but it also provides us with an undeniable testament to awareness of individual Scottish presence. The map depicts the world as the body of Christ, with Christ's head protruding from the top of the map and his hands and feet from the sides and bottom, and there is a fascinating catalog of exotic peoples drawn in the southern hemisphere.

Detail of the Psalter Map (#223); author-added arrow indicating Scocia, a bulbous out-cropping on the northwest of Britannia.

Map of Britain by Matthew Paris, a.k.a. the Royal map,
British Library Board, BL Royal 14C vii, fol 5v (#225.2)
Similarly to the Claudius map, the "Royal map" aligns settlements on a north-south axis, connecting them via a thin line. Just over Scocia, labeled largely at the top, is Stirling. The legend, Britanni-a / nunc dicta Anglia can be seen running along either side of the axis. Scarcely detectable are the beginnings of a wall, north of Carlisle and east of Galloway, labeled murus pictorum.

Cotton form of Paris' England (British Library, Cotton MSS, Claudius, D.)
measures 33.8 x 22.4 cm (#225.2)

The instability of Anglo-Scottish coexistence during the 13th century, determined that cartography of the British Isles be an act of imaginative fantasy responding to the perceived relationship between England and Scotland. This can be especially observed in the various ways that cartographers depict the division between the Scottish highlands and the rest of Britain. On the one hand, the hodgepodge of loosely connected regions in the north and the inaccessibility of the highlands made accurate delineation of any boundaries, if that was among a cartographer's objectives, difficult; these were uncharted territories. On the other hand, cartographers embraced this ambiguity as it allowed them to create an imaginative geography that suited their own perception of the world in place of the uncertain geography one would find on a chronicler's pages or a

herald's lips. The famous *Hereford mappamundi*, for example, created around the beginning of the first War for Scottish Independence (1296), emphasizes the separation between countries dramatically, by making the River Tweed a thickened, watery barrier that draws the eastern and western coasts to a bottleneck suggestive of earlier maps found in the works of Matthew Paris and Gerald of Wales. The cartographer, Richard of Haldingham, has labeled *Scocia, Louthian, Anglia,* and *Britannia Insula*, ascribing Scotland a clear place to the north.

The *Hereford mappamundi (shown below, #226)* is the only complete surviving English example of a type of map which was primarily a visualization of all branches of knowledge in a Christian framework and only secondly a geographical object. It can best be understood in the context of the tradition to which it belonged.

After the fall of the Roman Empire in the fifth century, monks and scholars struggled desperately to preserve from destruction by pagan barbarians the flotsam and jetsam of classical history and learning; to consolidate them and to reconcile them with Christian teaching and biblical history. The Old and New Testaments contained few doctrinal implications for geography, other than a bias in favor of an inhabited world consisting of three interlinked continents containing descendants of Noah's three sons. In the eyes of some (but by no means all) theologians, a fourth inhabited continent, the *Antipodes*, would implicitly have denied the descent of mankind from Noah, and the depiction of such a continent was deemed to be heretical by them. Most medieval mapmakers seem to have accepted this constraint, but world maps showing four continents are not uncommon: notably the world maps created by Beatus of Liebana in the late eighth century to illustrate his *Commentary on the Apocalypse of St. John (#207)*. Generally, though, it was not difficult to adapt surviving copies of existing, secular world maps to suit the purposes of Christian writers from the fifth century onwards.

The *Hereford* map joins a number of others around this period that reflect the imperial push of the English monarchy's ambitions, especially those of Edward I's. Like other English *mappaemundi*, the place of Britain on the map is "particularly exaggerated," but the topography of this section of the map also includes a number of locales that, except for their military purposes, have little reason to be depicted among the larger towns and ecclesiastical centers. Such names as *Carnarvon* and *Cunwey* were central to Edward's wars against the Welsh, while *Carlua* (Carlisle) and *Casto Novo*, or Newcastle-on-Tyne, were important military outposts against the Scots. And while these places are located with some degree of accuracy, the Scottish settlements to the north are less carefully placed, with *Edenburgh, Rokesburg*, and *Berwic* awkwardly aligned with the River Tweed. This cartographer's vision of the British Isles highlights the imagined separation between Scottish and English cultures, as the Tweed is expanded well beyond its proportions to resemble more accurately the land between the Firths of Forth and Clyde to the north. Conversely, the faintness of the barely present land-bridge, while "dividing the two lands," simultaneously shows the uncomfortably tenuous yet undeniably present connection the mapmaker saw between the territories. This connection also displays subtle tactical awareness; the only way by which any large force entered the northern reaches of Scotland, and this was one of Scotland's defensive advantages, was by fording the River Forth or crossing the narrow bridge at Stirling. Depicting the separation between Scotland and England as a shallow stretch of water between lands demonstrates a consciousness in the cartographer of the potential permeability between north and south, but also awareness of the difficulties involved in that crossing. Moreover, he imagines a geography marked by the spread of empire with

tactical outposts, with its uncanny dissidents sealed alluringly away to the north, revealing this cartographer's vision of a world emphatically shaped by Anglo-Scottish and Anglo-Welsh conflicts.

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Detail of the British Isles on the 13th century Hereford Map. Anglia, Wallia, Hibernia, Scotia Scocia, at far-left and labeled in its center, is tenuously connected to the rest of the Britannia insula (labeled in the south) by a faint isthmus

The geographical form and content of the *Hereford* map is derived from the writings of Pliny, Solinus, Augustine, Strabo, Jerome, the *Antonine Itinerary*, St. Isidore, and Orosius. The overriding theme of this map is that of a religious one. The amount of space dedicated to the other parts of the world varied according to their traditional historical or biblical importance and the preoccupations of the author of the text that the map illustrated. Because of this, space devoted to the author or patron's homeland was often much exaggerated when judged by modern standards, as in the case of England, Wales and Ireland on the *Hereford mappamundi*.

The British Isles are drawn on a larger scale than the neighboring parts of the continent, and this representation is of special interest on account of its early date. With the exception of four maps drawn by Matthew Paris, about 1250 *(#225)*, this is the earliest medieval attempt at a detailed map of these islands to have survived. The appearance of this portion of the *Hereford* map, in particular the narrow form of the English Channel and North Sea, strongly suggest that an existing map of the British Isles (probably not Matthew Paris') has been fitted into the general framework of this world map by cutting out a segment of the main land mass of Europe. This would explain the

distortion of the coastline, particularly in southeast England, and perhaps also the complete omission of East Anglia. The circular shape of the map, again, no doubt accounts for the curved outlines of western Scotland and Ireland.

On the *Hereford* map, the areas retain their Latin names, *Britannia insula* and *Hibernia, Scotia, Wallia,* and *Cornubia,* and are neatly divided, usually by rivers, into compartments, North and South Ireland, Wales, Cornwall, England, and Scotland. Cathedral cities such as *Durham, Lincoln, Hereford*, and *Canterbury* are displayed; castles and towers such as *London, Conway, Caernarvon, Dover*, and *Edinburgh*, and the mountains of *Snowdon* and *Grampians* are just some of the exceptional detail included among these special isles.

Detail from the Hereford map of England and Wales. Note Lincoln on its hill and Snowdon ('Snawdon'), Caernarvon and Conway in Wales, referring to the castles Edward I was building there when the map was being created.

Among other things, the network of rivers and the citing of cities are extremely impressive in northeast England, whereas the depiction of the southwest, in the Hereford area, has some striking inaccuracies.

Maximos Planudes' Ptolemaic Map of the British Isles

Around the year 1300, the Byzantine scholar Maximos Planudes rediscovered a copy of *Geographia*, written in the second century AD by Ptolemy. Maximos was able to recreate some of the maps created by the ancient cartographer, including this one showing the British Isles.

Like Mathew Paris' maps of England, each one rather different in terms of the basic outline and detail, Pietro Vesconte (fl. 1306–1330), a Genoese cartographer, produced a number of *mappaemundi* depicting the British Isles with a variety of configurations, as shown below.

Pietro Vesconte's world map, 1321, from Marino Sanudo's Liber secretorum fidelium crusis (oriented with East at the top) #228, British Library, Additional MS. 27376, ff.187v-188.*

Detail from Vesconte: the British Isles showing Scotland connected to England over a land-bridge

Vesconte world map, ca.1321, 35 cm diameter, oriented with East at the top
Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Rome/Scala (#228)

Detail: the British Isles, note that Scotland is again separated from England

In contrast to those maps that avoid or are unaware of Scotland's existence entirely, but also unlike the *Ebstorf (#224)* and *Psalter (#223)* maps that, like Ywain and Gawain, sought to outline a collective, connected Britain, in the 14th century many cartographers give Scotland an existence geographically separate from England, marginalizing it as an island lopped off from mainland Britain. We see such maps in the many copies of Ranulph Higden's universal history, the *Polychronicon* (#232). The most well known of the *Polychronicon* maps, the *Royal* map (see below) perhaps inspired by the Beatus maps of the 11th and 12th centuries (#207), excises Scotland from the much larger *Anglia*, packaging it into a relatively small square island to the west. Wales is similarly contracted and separated from the mainland. *Polychronicon* maps are variable, but they demonstrate a clear ethnographic emphasis in their separation of Scotland and Wales from the rest of the island. Andrew Galloway describes these maps as among the first "nationalist" world maps with its apparent focus on labeling and delineating nations. And yet scribes were reading Higden in a "nationalist" vein, in the patriotic sense of the word, for we have Higden's holograph *Polychronicon*, Huntington MS 132, in which *Anglia* is not emphasized at all. The cartographic emphasis on England specifically, then, is the work of readers of Higden's. On the verso side of the *Royal* Higden map, we find a smaller, one-page map that recalls Higden's holograph, on which the British Isles are diagrammatically expressed in a single rectangle divided into five equal-sized rectangular landmasses labeled *Scocia, Man, Anglia, Wallia*, and *Hybernia* shown below. Such maps prefer drawing up racial lines in place of geographic ones, and demonstrates that the medieval cartographer was aware of the potential of the map to display different ways of seeing the world.

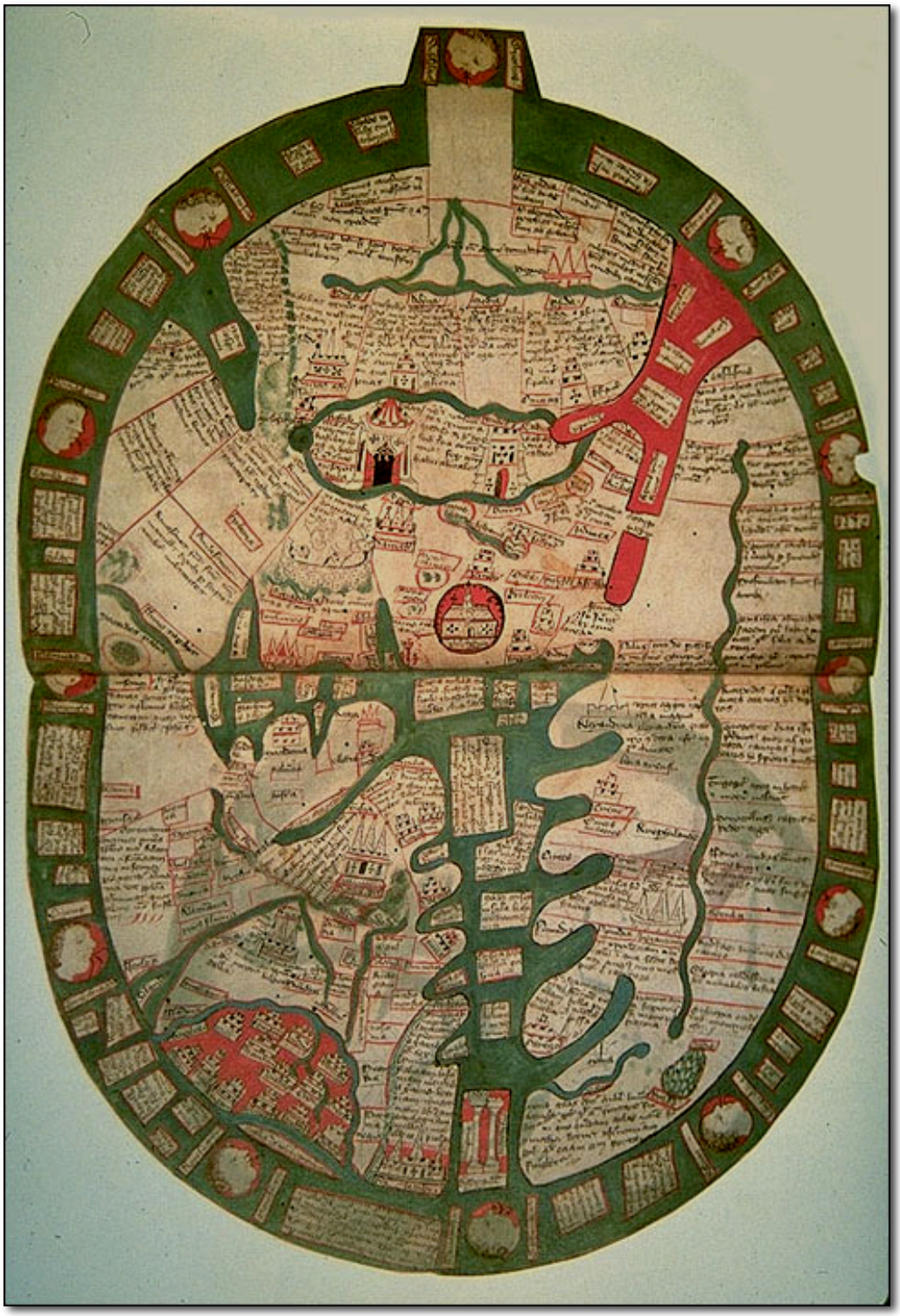
Detail of the smaller Higden Map, with the British Isles at bottom-center; the five sections are Scocia, Anglia, Man, Wallia, and Hibernia. British Library, Royal 14.C.IX, fol. 2v.

According to Klein, the difference between the *Royal* maps—one on the verso, one on the recto of the same leaf—is striking, and the discrepancy is only answerable by understanding that the artist experienced some national sentiment that caused him to exaggerate England (*Anglia*) as a disproportionately important entity on the world map, which is emphasized by its red coloring. On the next page, the cartographer had less space for such hyperbole, but felt Higden's original (in HM 132) ethnographic differences important enough to emulate in dividing his rectangle with the ocean. This is in keeping with many aspects of Higden's history. Higden (ca. 1280–1364) was a Benedictine monk living in Cheshire during the Wars of Scottish Independence. e scope of the *Polychronicon* takes us from the biblical beginnings of the world to early 14th century England, and though Higden's criticisms of the Scots become more pointed the closer he gets to the Wars, even in Higden's earliest history of Britain one can detect animosity towards the Scottish people. Higden and his scribes were writing in the wake

of Edward I's vicious subjugation of the Welsh in the 13th century and during the tumultuous aftermath of the wars with the Scots in the 14th. Responding to these events, many of which are recorded in the *Polychronicon*, these maps, in recognizing the ethnic difference between the peoples of the British Isles, expel those peoples from one another diagrammatically.

It is not surprising, then, that there is little agreement among cartographers regarding the placement, size, or shape of Scotland, for by the 13th century the persistent issue between the English and Scottish monarchs was exactly that—the shape of Scotland. Were the Scottish Northumbrian lands held under the English monarch? Was the Scottish monarch a vassal of the English king's, placing all Scotland under English suzerainty? By the last half of the 13th century, during Edward I's reign (1272–1307) especially, the variety of intricate and subtle political maneuvers the monarchs made to signify sovereignty or fealty would have befuddled the most astute medieval observer.47 Combine such political inconsistency with the confusing and often contradictory evidence for any unified Scotland between its various regions prior to the Wars of Independence, and Scotland's cartographic polymorphism seems unavoidable. And while on the surface relations between Scotland and England seemed good for much of the 13th century, the English monarchy took many opportunities to remind the Scots of their subordinate existence. The answer to the question of English overlord-ship, in fact, varied largely depending on what these countries needed from one another.

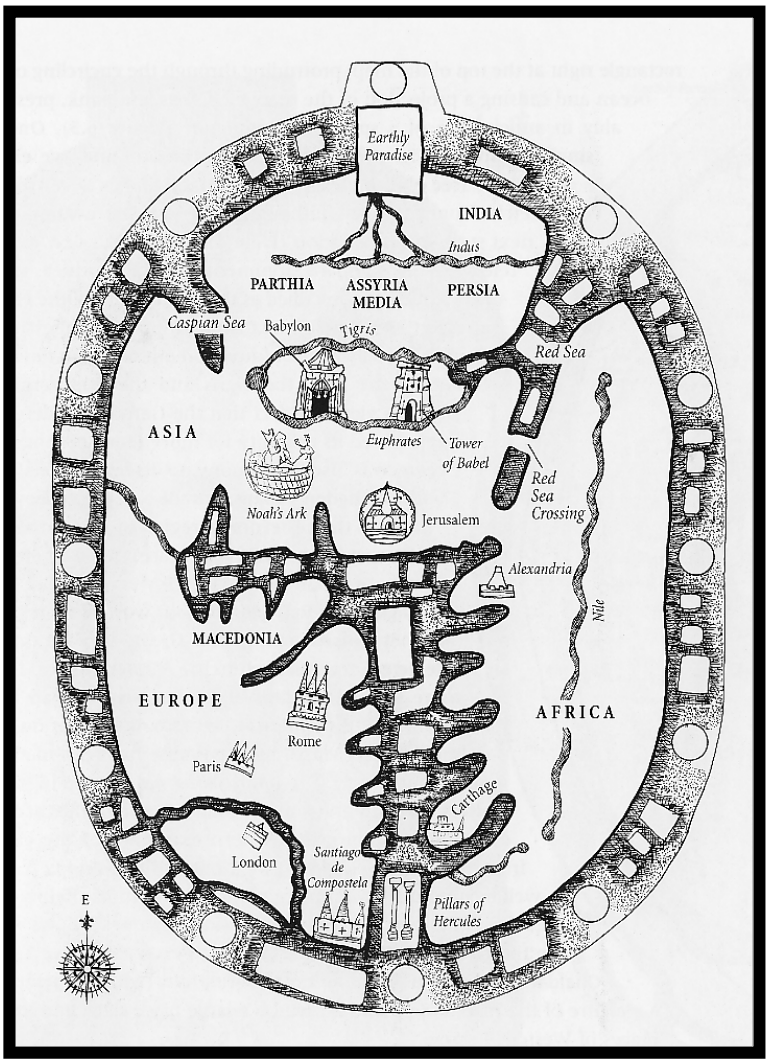
The instability of Anglo-Scottish coexistence, then, determined that cartography of the British Isles be an act of imaginative fantasy responding to the perceived relationship between England and Scotland. This can be especially observed in the various ways that cartographers depict the division between the Scottish highlands and the rest of Britain. On the one hand, the hodgepodge of loosely connected regions in the north and the inaccessibility of the highlands made accurate delineation of any boundaries, if that was among a cartographer's objectives, difficult; these were uncharted territories. On the other hand, cartographers embraced this ambiguity as it allowed them to create an imaginative geography that suited their own perception of the world in place of the uncertain geography one would find on a chronicler's pages or a herald's lips.



World map by Ranulf Higden, a.k.a The Ramsey Abbey map, a.k.a. the Royal map, 1342, 46 x 34 cm, British Library, Royal MS. 14 C.IX, ff.1v-2. #232.
England is to the lower left side, with a red background. Fourteen cities are represented and identified, including London, Winchester, Lincoln, Oxford, Worcester, Gloucester, Norwich, Northampton, York, and Exeter.

On the late 14th century copy the world map (above) occupies a double page, 46 x 34 cm. It is oriented with East at the top, Jerusalem near its center and the heads around the map represent the twelve winds. Not too surprising, in Britain (shown in the color red, lower left) there are more town symbols than are shown for all the rest of Europe. In fact, there are some 39 castellated towns throughout the entire world map, 14 of which are in England alone, while there are only four throughout all the continent of Africa.

Detail of Anglia, on the 14th century Higden world Map, also known as the Royal Map. Anglia is completely red, while Scotland (Scocia, which is written upside-down), is indicated by an author-added arrow.



The *Hereford* map's expressive coastal formations are not unlike what we find almost a century later in the *Evesham* map (#*236.2*), created ca. 1390, where under the influence of *Polychronicon* cartographical conventions, *Scocia* is entirely cut away from mainland Britain. The map displays a marked Anglo-centric "patriotism" in its landmarks, and we also find one of the maps "surprising archaisms" in that *Carlyl* is placed in Scotland, this despite the fact that as recently as 1385 Richard II had led an army into Scotland and the late 1380s saw a revival in Anglo-Scottish border con ict.59 Carlisle's position on the *Evesham* map is even more surprising since contemporary authors and chroniclers were aware of Carlisle's importance. The city always occupies a location at the very spot where England becomes Scotland on medieval maps; it is a perennial border town. By the time the *Evesham* map was created, Carlisle had become the home of King Arthur's court in English romance, and its contested qualities, its borderland nature, and its history of confused allegiances, made it an apt locale to grapple with the ambiguity expressed in the *Hereford* or *Evesham* maps. As Patricia Ingham argues, " the ambiguities of Arthurian geography ... allude to historic struggles over the geography of British union, particularly to relations between central England and the regions of its so-called 'Celtic Fringe." So, too, do the ambiguities of these maps allude to struggles over contested lands under the influence of Edward I, "le roy covetous," or his similarly ambitious grandson, Edward III, who has commonly been associated with the alliterative *Morte Arthure*. Both monarchs' careers were marked by their imperial ambitions in Scotland.

The *Evesham* map's Scottish placement of Carlisle speaks to the unsettled nature of the Anglo-Scottish relationship, and in its insulating of Scotland (and Wales) from the rest of the island, it joins the Hereford and Higden maps by imaginatively separating these historically entangled peoples. Rather than presenting a simply imperial view of England, these maps point to what Kathy Lavezzo has noted as the dual potential of the *mappaemundi* to establish England as simultaneously imperialist and nationalist. There is a negotiation of national and imperial impulses akin to what we find in romance happening on these maps as they explore a malleable topography, revealing an imagined consolidation of region while extending English interest in external locales via graphic representation of England's larger-than-life presence in the world.

Detail of the British Isles on the 14th century 'Evesham world map'; note carlyl at the bottom of Scocia, its own island, to the left. College of Arms MS 18/19. (#*236.2*)

The Eversham world map, 1390, #236.2

The author of the *Evesham* world map*)* marked settlements outside the British Isles with roughly sketched towers of different designs, but he used no sign for Bordeaux or for most of the named towns in England, Scotland and Ireland. Canterbury and Evesham are understandably but inconsistently shown as churches. It is in the portrayal of mountains, however, that the second scribe shows the greatest deviation from his predecessor. The yellow-painted Mounts Dotayin and Gotthard appear as deciduous trees. Possibly the scribe, who may not have known Latin, was confusing the Tree of Melopos on his exemplar with nearby Mons Garthabathmon. Evesham is the only place in England, apart from Canterbury, to be highlighted on the map by the depiction of a church instead of a tower (like those used for the cities of London, Dover, Bristol and Exeter) or a place-name alone. The church symbol presumably refers to Evesham Abbey rather than to the secular town of Evesham, and the use of such a symbol must indicate the importance that the maker of the map attached to Evesham Abbey over all other English religious foundations - despite their greater contemporary importance - apart from St. Augustine, Canterbury.

The *Evesham* world map was almost certainly commissioned for Evesham Abbey in about 1390, was added to and amended some 20 years later, and was then reused by 1452. It derives from what was probably a standard world map copied for Ranulf Higden for his *Polychronicon (#232).* However, there is no evidence that the *Evesham* map was ever intended to illustrate any particular text. Within the traditional geographical and spiritual framework, the pre-occupation with the universal, ancient, and mythical-typical of earlier large world maps-has yielded primacy to the depiction of contemporary England and the territorial, dynastic, and commercial aspects of English patriotism.

It is in England, however, that the later additions to the *Evesham* map are most striking. The original intention would seem to have been to depict England on a north-south alignment consistent with the rest of the map. Viewed from this perspective, and given the constraints imposed by the need to accommodate the island on the outer extremity of the ocean sea, on the edge of the map, there is some resemblance to geographical reality. The River Severn has become a sea separating England from Wales and the Devon-Cornwall peninsula a hump resembling East Anglia. East Anglia itself is left with no room for expression because of the lack of space between it and a circular Europe. Northern England's curve to the right, reminiscent of the Ptolemaic maps of Britain, is almost certainly accidental and the result, once again, of the overall shape of the map.

The evidence of erasures on the map's surface shows unmistakably that the original map was later revised. The scribe responsible for these revisions evidently failed to understand the alignment of England. He mistook the east coast of the island for the south coast and transformed the interior into an image of England as viewed from Evesham. With more than fifty place-names, England is toponymically richer on the *Evesham* map than on any other surviving medieval map of Britain apart from these by Matthew Paris and the Gough map and its derivatives. A handful of place-names, including Minehead, Torrington, Penryn and Winchcombe, are shown on a map for the first time. Almost all the place-names are given in English, a distinct change from the practice of a century earlier and evidence of the growing importance of the vernacular language. In contrast, only a handful of place-names fall beyond a line running southwest to northeast from St. Michael's off the south coast of Cornwall, to Lincoln.

The West Country and the southwestern Midlands dominate England. The distribution of place-names is particularly thick in two regions. That one should be the Evesham district is not surprising. In relation to Evesham, the locations of Worcester [*Worceter*]. Tewkesbury [*Tewkyburi*], Gloucester [*Glouceter*], Cheltenham [*Chelteham*], Northleach [Northlach], Cirencester [Susceter] and Malmesbury [Malmisbury] and the abbeys of Winchombe [*Wynchombe*] and Hailes [*haylies*] are more or less correct. In this connection, it is worth remembering that the *Historia Vitae et Regni Ricardi Secundi* was partly, derived from the chronicles of John of Malvern, a monk in Worcester, while information about events of the year 1400 were probably supplied by an informant in the Augustinian house at Cirencester. Such links demonstrate Evesham's associations with both towns.

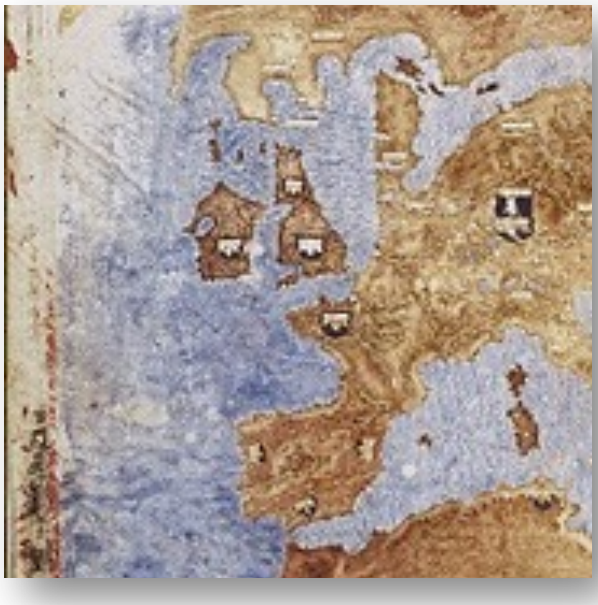
The principal towns and ports of the south coast of Devon and Cornwall - Exeter [*exeter*], Totnes [*Tottenis*], Dartmouth [*dertemowth*], Plymouth [*plinmowth*], Liskeard [*leskyrt*], Fowey [*Fowey*] and Penryn [*peryn*] - are shown more or less in their correct sequence, with only Totnes and Exeter somewhat misplaced. The ports may have been included on the map primarily because of their trade with the foreign ports of Bruges, Rouen and, especially, Bordeaux. It is also not inconceivable that either the abbot or the scribe had personal links with merchants or mariners in the area. Interestingly, St. David's (*S*[*aicitu*]S David) in Wales is marked by a tower as large as the place sign for London whereas towns in Scotland and Ireland are named but given no sign at all.

Most unexpected of all is a group of place-names on or near the north coast of Devon. The place-names start with the tiny settlement of Taddiport [*Tadiport*], which at that time would have possessed little more than a chantry chapel, a leper hospital and a bridge across the Torridge. The place-names include Great Torrington [Torington], in the west, and then, in correct sequence, a number of places along the line of the A39 road (the modern version of an ancient route) from Barnstaple [*Barstapel*] to Bath [Baton] by way of Bridgwater [*Brigwater*], Minehead [*Minhed*], Glastonbury [*Glassenburi*] and Wells [*Welles*], a place with which Evesham Abbey had close links. From Bath, a variety of routes would have taken the traveler through Gloucester to Evesham.

Taddiport is not mentioned in the cartularies of Evesham Abbey, making its inclusion on the map very strange. Small settlements with bridges such as Taddiport do indeed feature prominently on the Gough map because of their importance as intermediate points along the routes that constituted the map's internal structure. This is not the case with Taddiport's presence on the Evesham map, however, since it features at the start and not in the middle of an itinerary.

Finally, the map contains some surprising archaisms. For example, Carlisle [*Carlyl*] is placed in Scotland even though it had been finally ceded to England a century and a half earlier, in 1157. It looks very much as though the scribe and his patron were personally familiar with the places between Evesham and Taddiport and with the ports of the southwest of England. In contrast, the other place-names - either well-known monastic and religious centers or important market towns - may only have been known to them indirectly from family links or from travelers who visited Evesham. This was, after all, the means by which Matthew Paris in St. Albans learned of many of the places on his maps.

Portolano Laurenziano Gaddiano from the Laurentian Sea Atlas, Medicean Atlas, 1351, #233, Biblioteca Medicea Laurenziana, Florence, Italy, originally oriented with South at the top



Detail showing the British Isles (re-oriented with North at the top)

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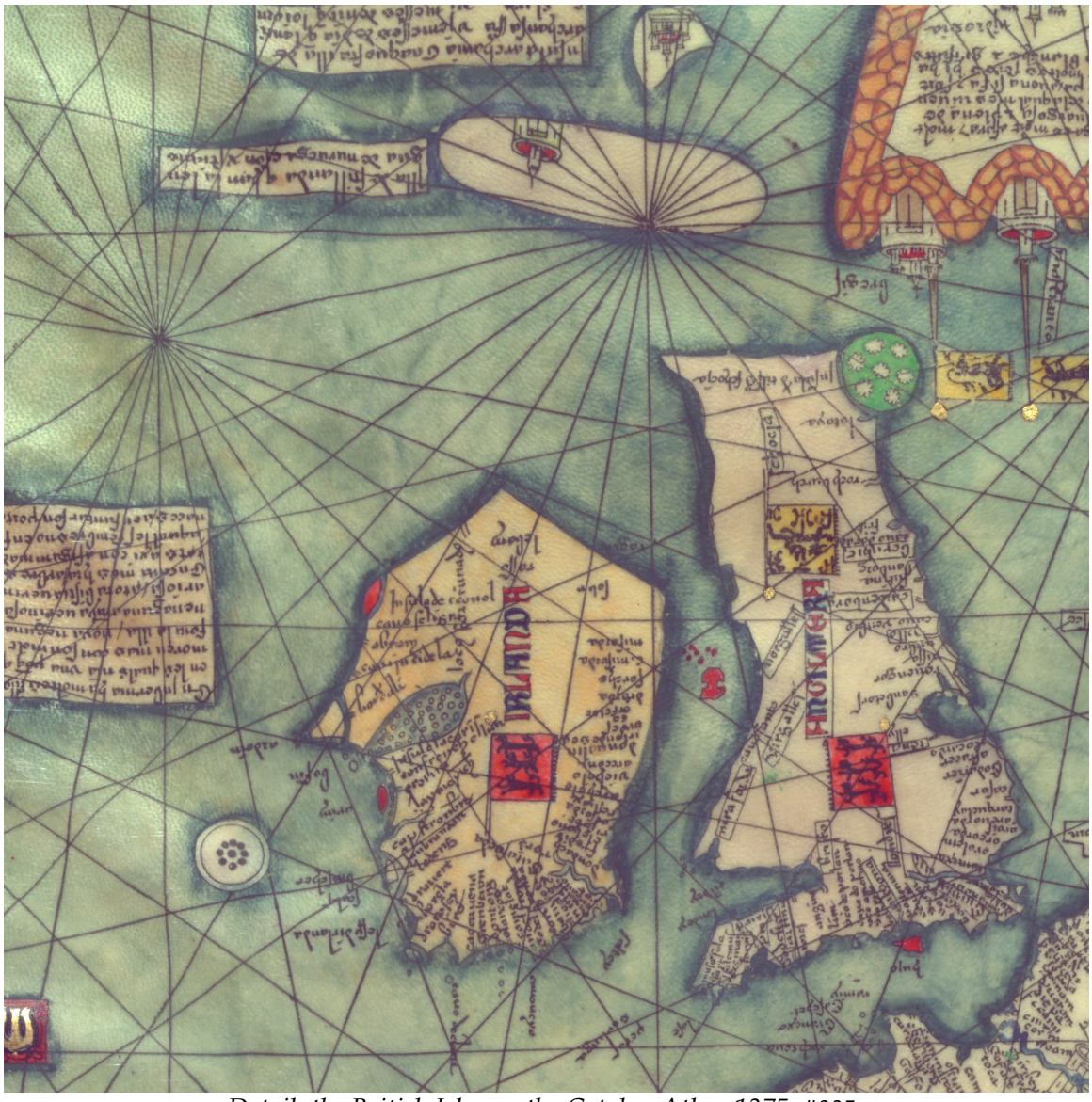


Detail: the British Isles on the Catalan Atlas, 1375, #235
Note the emphasis on Galway Bay in Ireland and the flat-top Scotland

This 'atlas' was the work of a family of Catalonian Jewish chart makers who worked in Majorca at the end of the 14th century and was commissioned by Charles V of France at a time when the reputation of the Catalan chart makers was at its peak. King Charles requested this map from Peter of Aragon, patron of the best Majorcan mapmaker of the time: Abraham Cresques. The 'atlas' that resulted contained the latest information on Asia and China and has subsequently been called "the most complete picture of geographical knowledge as it stood in the later Middle Ages."

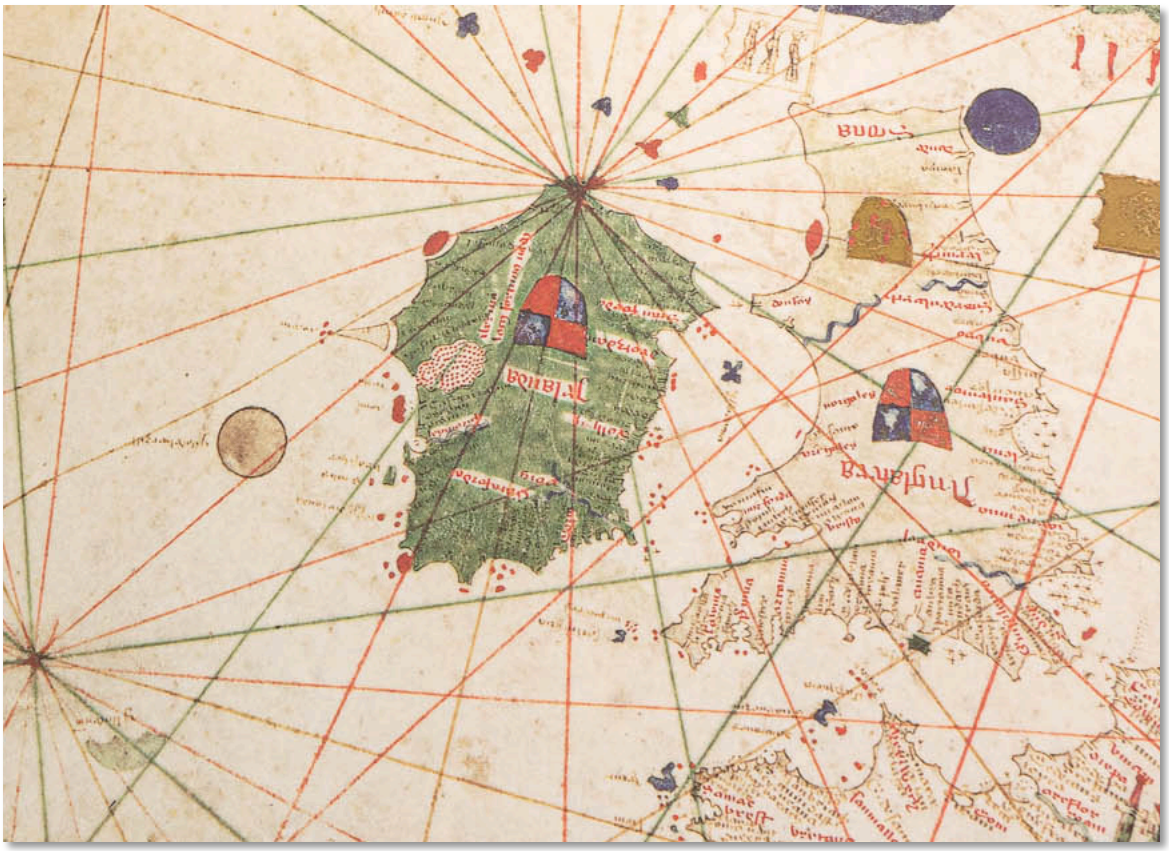
The title of the *Atlas* shows clearly the spirit in which it was executed and its content: *Mappamundi, that is to say, image of the world and of the regions which are on the earth and of the various kinds of peoples which inhabit it*. Originally the *Catalan Atlas* consisted of six large wooden panels that were covered with parchment on one side. This form later was transformed into a block-book, in which each sheet formed a double page, the parchment itself serving as a hinge between each of the two wooden panels. Today the original *Catalan Atlas* can be found in the Bibliotheque Nationale, Paris.

The Gough, or Bodleian map, 1360 of England, Scotland and Orkney
The tube-like protuberance of Scotland, while more sparsely described than the rest of the island, is the most detailed by far up to its time. (oriented with East at the top)

The *Gough* Map above is important due to its break with previous theologically-based mapping during this period in Europe. Its depiction of routes and marked distances is unique in British maps before the 17th century. And compared to previously known maps, like Ptolemy's *Geography*, it greatly improves the detail on the coast of England and Wales, although its depiction of the then independent Kingdom of Scotland is very poor. Towns are shown in some detail, with London and York written in gold lettering and other principal settlements illustrated in detail. Despite its accuracy, the map does contain a number of other errors. Notably, islands and lakes such as Anglesey and Windermere are oversized, whilst the strategic importance of rivers is shown by their emphasis. Well known but geographically small features such as the Peninsula in Durham are also overly-prominent. The map contains numerous references to mythology as if they were geographical fact, as illustrated by comments about Brutus'

mythical landings in Devon. Nevertheless, it remains the most accurate map of Britain prior to the 16th century.

Following the Wars of Scottish Independence, the 14th century saw only a few maps outside the numerous reproductions of the model found in Higden's *Polychronicon*. They, too, hint at unsettledness between north and south. The 14th century *Gough* map, for instance, displays an incredible amount of topographic and geographic detail in England yet its Scotland looks but half-formed. The only really significant map of the Britain of its time, the map describes some six hundred settlements, many major rivers, and plots a network of townships connected by fine red lines with figures giving distances that runs as far north as Carlisle. The map is a testament to cartographic ingenuity and detail, ambitious in its scope and thorough in depiction; despite giving far less information north of Hadrian's Wall, this map easily gives us the most thorough cartographic treatment of Scotland yet. The thinning out of information north of Carlisle does mark Scotland as something of a *terra incognita*, but compared with other contemporary maps, it is paradoxically clear that this cartographer envisioned Scotland as a part of the whole of Britain despite the snaking of the Forth through the island.



The British Isles and Insula Brasil on a chart by Meciá de Viladestes

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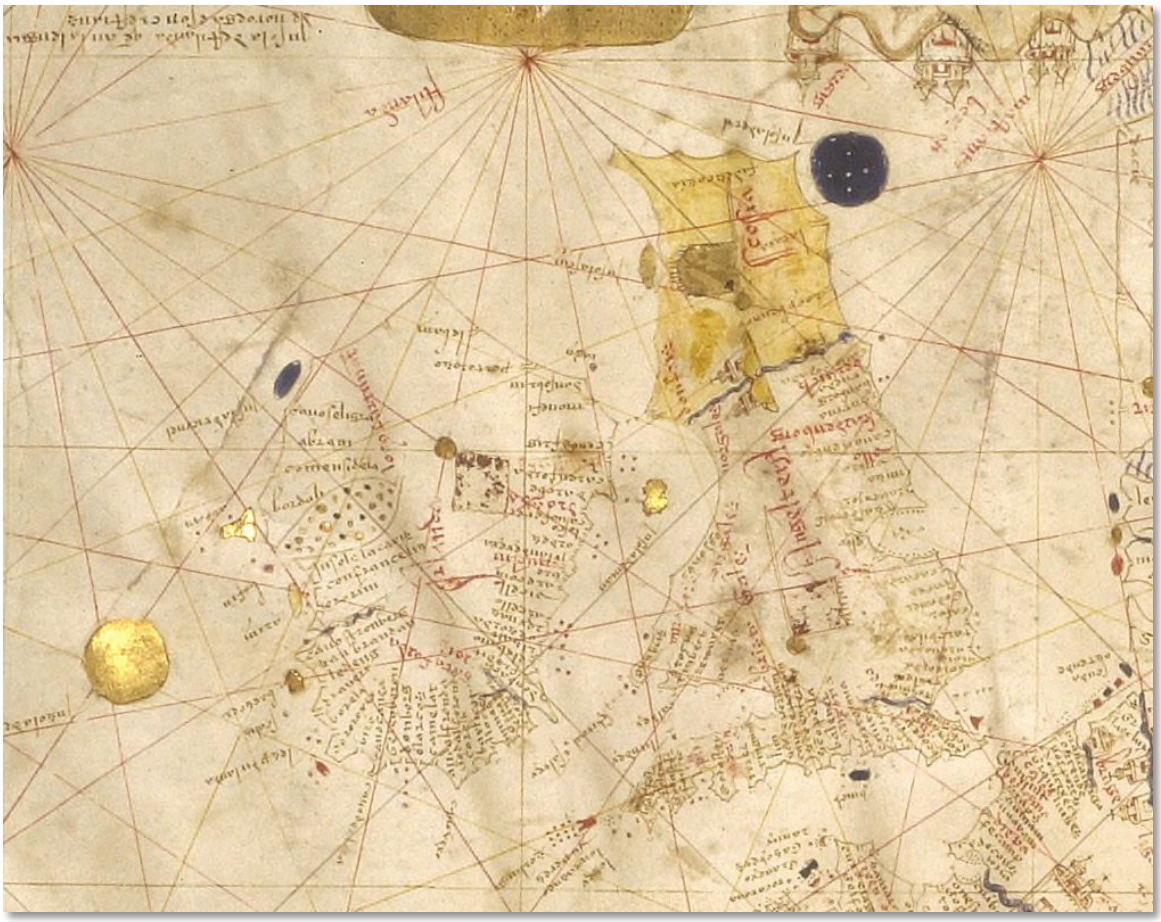
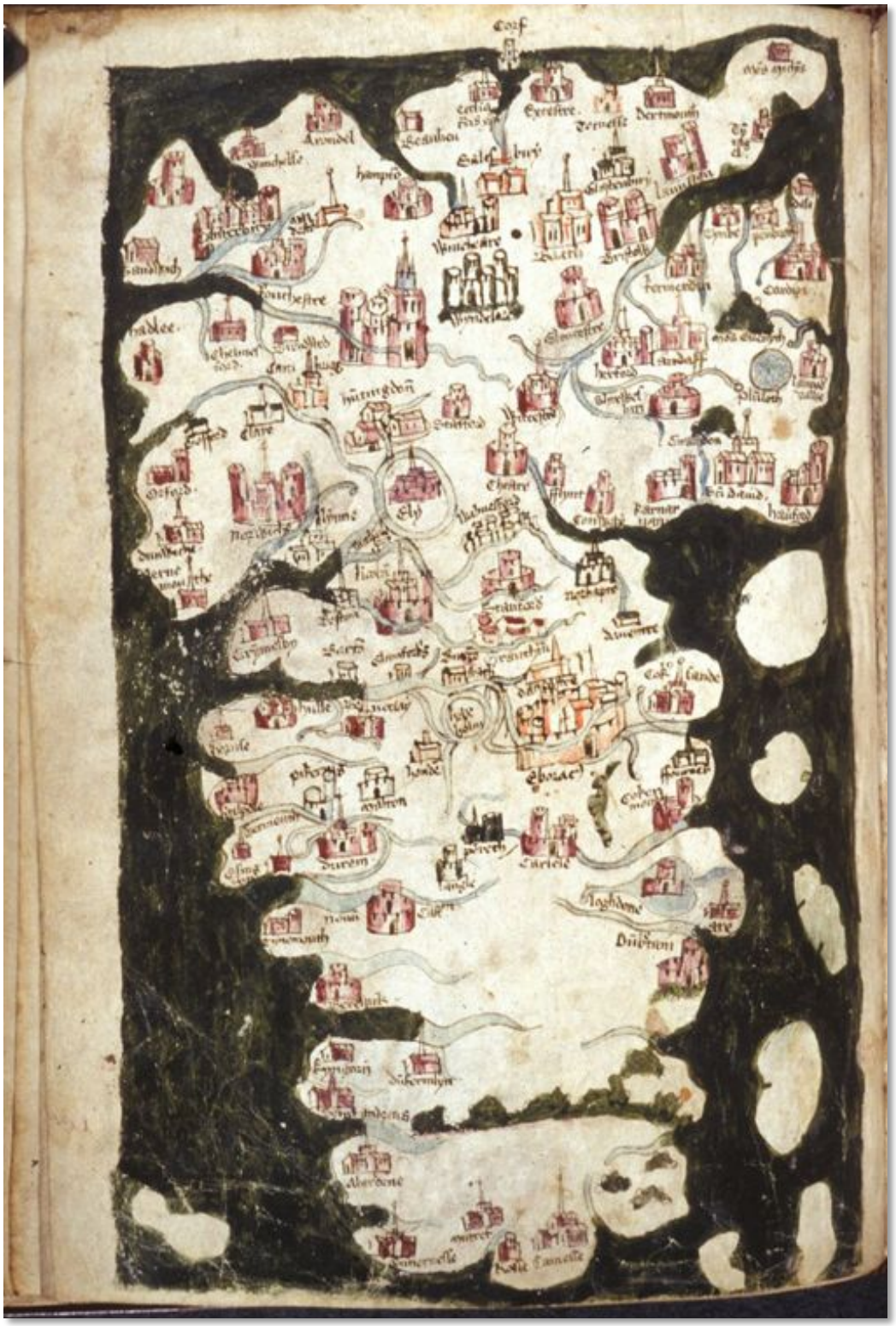


The British Isles and Insula Brasil on another 1413 chart by Meciá de Viladestes



Map of England and Scotland, British Library, Harley 1808, f.9v
Chronicle of England, entitled 'Cronica facta sub compendio', ending with the coronation of Henri IV on 13 October 1399 (ff. 10-17v), preceded by a map of Britain or 'Totius Britanniae Tabula Chorographica', early 15th century
Oriented with South at the top

Detail of Harley 1808, f.9v - Wales

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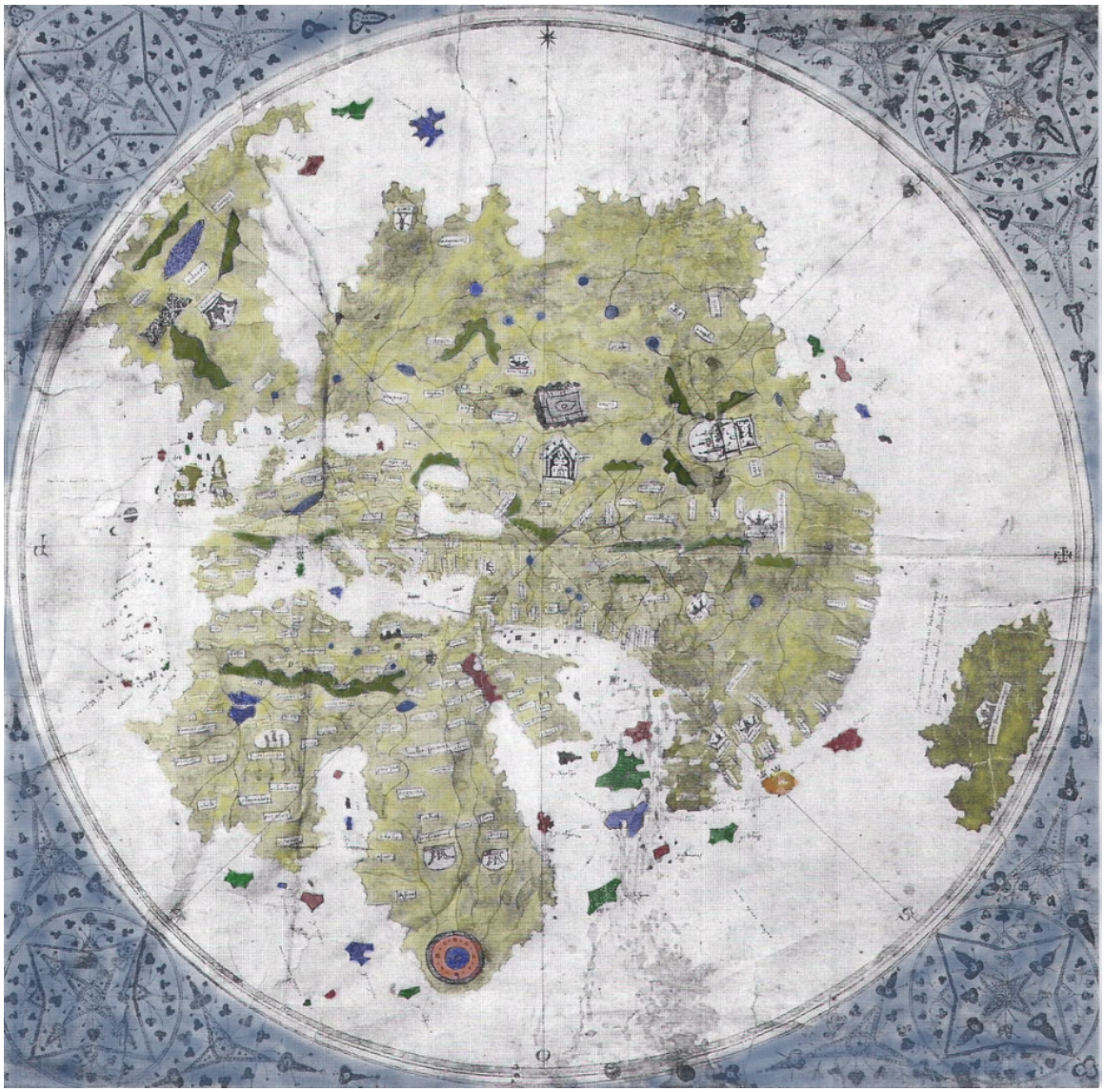
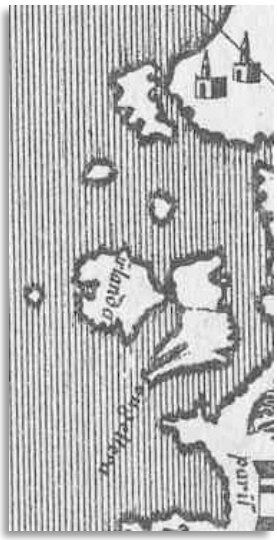
Detail of Harley 1808, f.9v



A colorized version of the de Virga map, 1411-15 (#240), below is detail of the British Isles

Note that Ireland seems larger than England/Scotland and,
again, the emphasis of Galway Bay in Ireland (the "Purgatory of St. Patrick')

A facsimile of the 1436 Andrea Bianco mappamundi (#241) oriented with East at the top
Below, re-oriented, detail of the British Isles



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World map by Giovanni Leardo, 1452-53, (#242)
American Geographical Society, Milwaukee University
(oriented with East at the top)

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Detail: the British Isles where Scotland and England form one island

Andreas Walsperger's World Map, 1448, Biblioteca Apostalica Vaticana, Rome, Pal. Lat. 1362b (oriented with South at the top) (#245)

Detai of the Walsperger mapl: British Isles (re-oriented with North at the top)

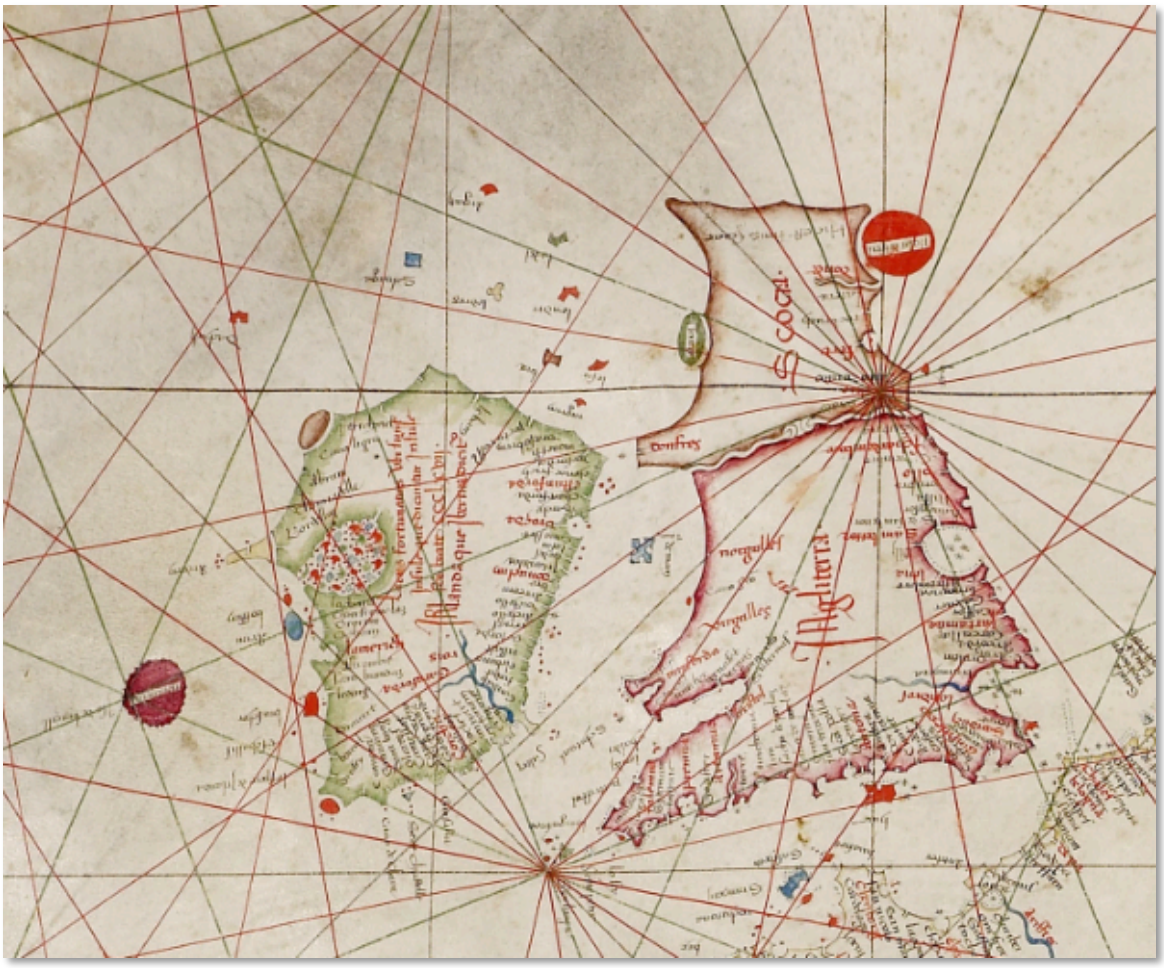
Catalan-Estense mappamundi, 1450-60 (#246)
Below, detail of the British Isles. Britain is divided by a double line north of Scarborough. The islands north of Scotland are "Inssula destillant" [Shetland] and "Insula darchana" [Orkney], "in which there are said to be six months of and six of continuous day." Northwest of these is a group labeled "islandes" of which the southernmost is called "Islands" [Iceland].

On this *Catalan-Estense mappamundi* the generally good delineation of European coasts there are exceptions, especially in more northern areas. Britain, as in many medieval maps, is shown split in two, or almost so, by a stretch of water, which may or may not reach the east coast between *Scardenburgh* [Scarborough] and *Bernie* [Berwick]. One may wonder if this originated as a misunderstanding of *Hadrian's Wall* or of a line of hills, for example the Cheviots. Of the northern islands, the furthest northwest is *Islanda* [Iceland], one of eight in an archipelago. *Archana* is clearly, by comparison with other maps, Orkney. But south of it is *inssula [sic] destillant,* whose inhabitants are said to be Norwegian-speaking Christians. This island is surely not a misplaced *Estland* [Estonia], as Kretschmer gives, but Shetland *[Hjaltland],* for which compare *Ilia de Scillanda*, near *Archania*, in the 1375 *Catalan Atlas (#235).*

The entire map has been shifted to the east in its circular frame, thus making more room in the Atlantic for its islands. The Azores, Canaries, and Madeira's are shown. Next to the Canaries, a long Latin text, drawn from Isidore and the voyage of Saint Brendan, describes the Fortunate Islands of antique fame. Plato's tale of *Atlantis* is recalled near an island labeled *illa de gentils; it was once as large as all Africa but now, by the will of God, is covered with water.* In the north is a group of colorful islands marked, *These islands are called 'islandes',* which may be a reference to Iceland. West of Ireland can be found the islands of *Main* and *Brezill*.

On the *Genoese mappamundi* of 1457 *(#248)* shown above, England, Scotland, and Ireland are represented as on the *portolan* charts of the period, over each of which flies a pennant. To the south of Ireland, in the ocean, we find the following legend: *Concerning Ireland two [stories] are told. One of these [asserts] that there is an abyss called the well of St. Patrick through which one descends into the lower regions. In this [well] the inhabitants often see many wonderful things and tell about them. The other [story relates] that certain of their trees bear fruit which, decaying within, produces a worm which, as it subsequently develops, becomes hairy and feathered, and, provided with wings, flies like a bird.*

Detail of the Genoese mappamundi showing the British Isles



Detail: the British Isles on a manuscript sea chart by Grazioso Benincasa, 1468
A flat-top Scotland is shown separated from England and Ireland is shown with the fabled landmark, the Purgatory of St Patrick, an inland loch with many islands. The text records that there are 368 islands. A dark red circle to the left of Ireland is marked "Brazill", known to exist due to classical legend, the location and form however are obviously as yet unknown.
The Bay of Cardigan is not shown on this map, the Welsh coast and that of northern England is a smooth curve, dating this chart to pre 1550. Scotland is a separate island, the knot tying England and Scotland is typical of Benincasa, who reproduced the standard nautical chart with this new feature. London is marked in red and the Thames is indicated. The red-circled island to the northeast of Scotland is thought, by some, to represent Thule.

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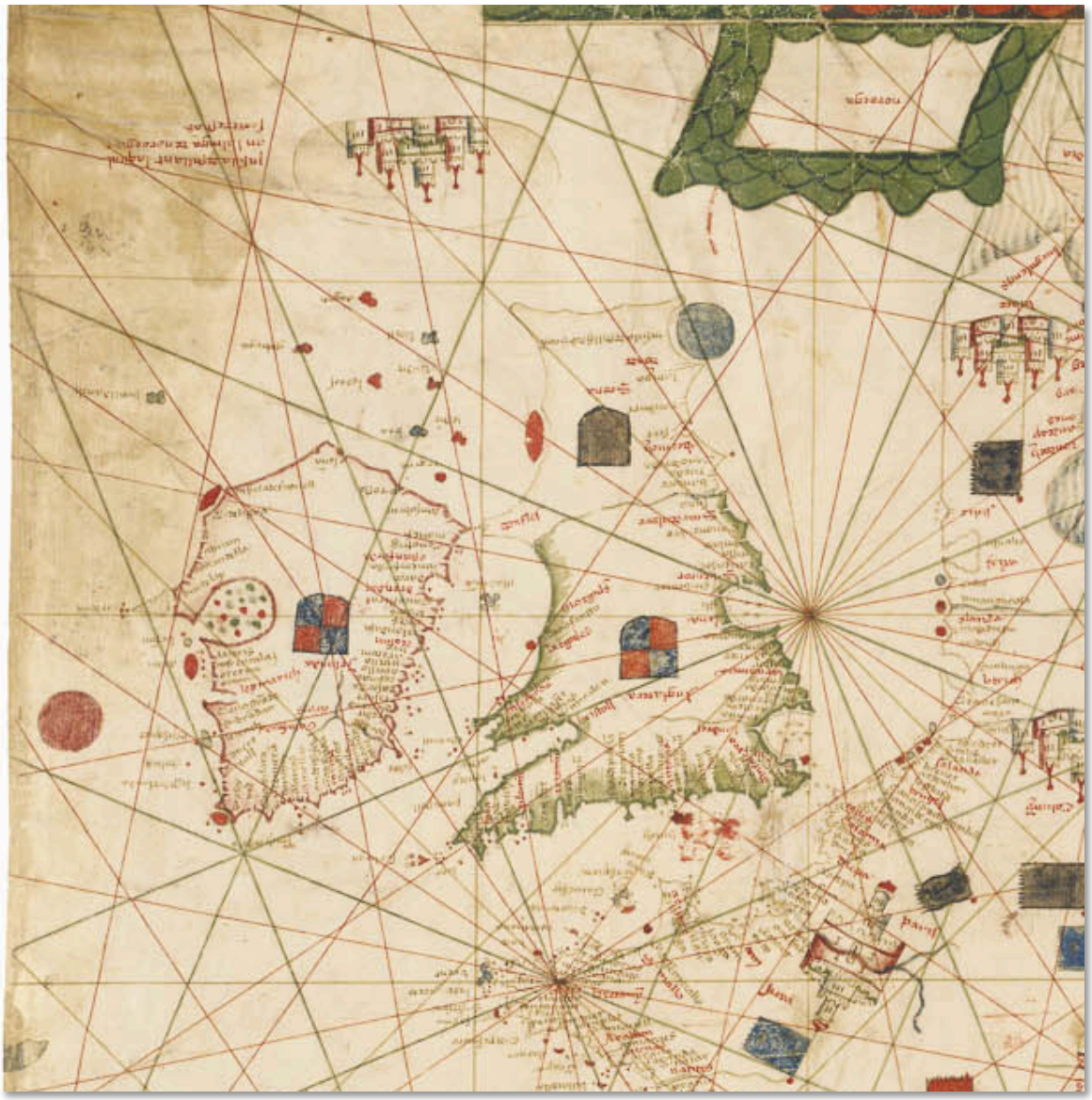
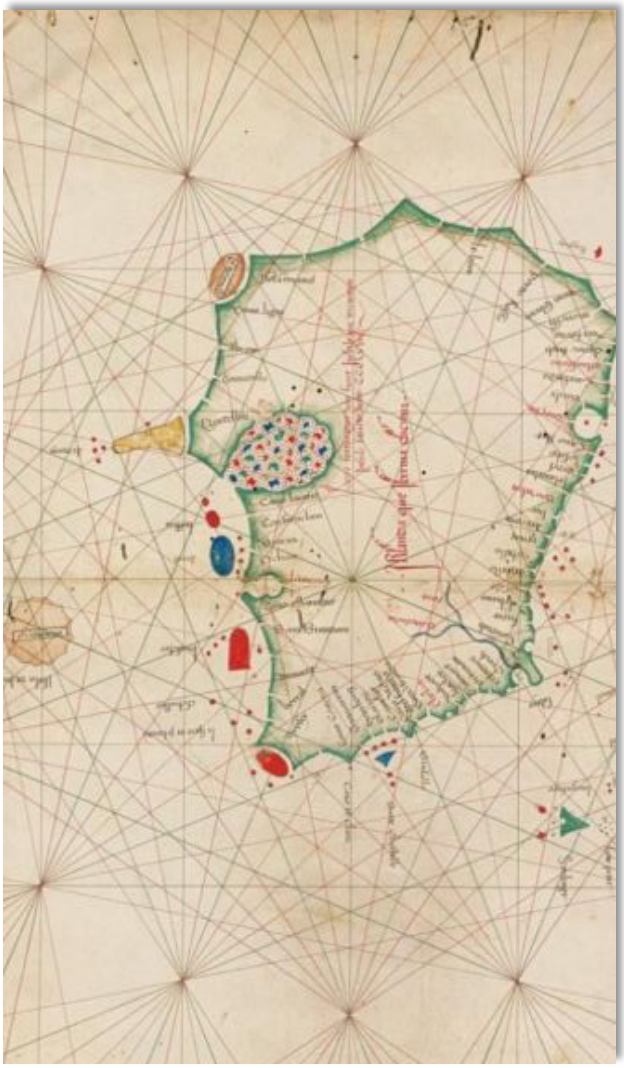


The British Isles and Insula Brasil on an unsigned portolan chart attributed to Petrus Roselli, second half of the 15th century



Irlanda que Ibernia dicitur" [Ireland which is called Hibernia].

This map is another hand-drawn on vellum (tanned sheepskin) and contained in an atlas made in Venice by the Italian navigator and cartographer Grazioso Benincasa in 1468. It is considered the oldest known separate individual map of Ireland. It is part of a maritime atlas, of a type known to scholars as a "portolan", and contains seven double-page navigational maps designed for ships used in trade and exploration. 57 place names are identified, among them Porto Rosso (Portrush), Limerich, Chorca, Drogda (Drogheda); and Bre (Bray). The capital is not identified although a settlement spelt as Donvelim might refer to Dublin or Dún Laoghaire. Some offshore islands, including the Aran Islands and those in Clew Bay, are depicted in red, blue, green and gold. Only two rivers feature in the map – what appear to be the Barrow and the Nore.
Ireland is again shown with the fabled landmark, the Purgatory of St Patrick, an inland loch with many islands. The text records that there are 368 islands. A golden circle to the left of Ireland is marked "Brazill", known to exist due to classical legend, the location and form however are obviously as yet unknown.

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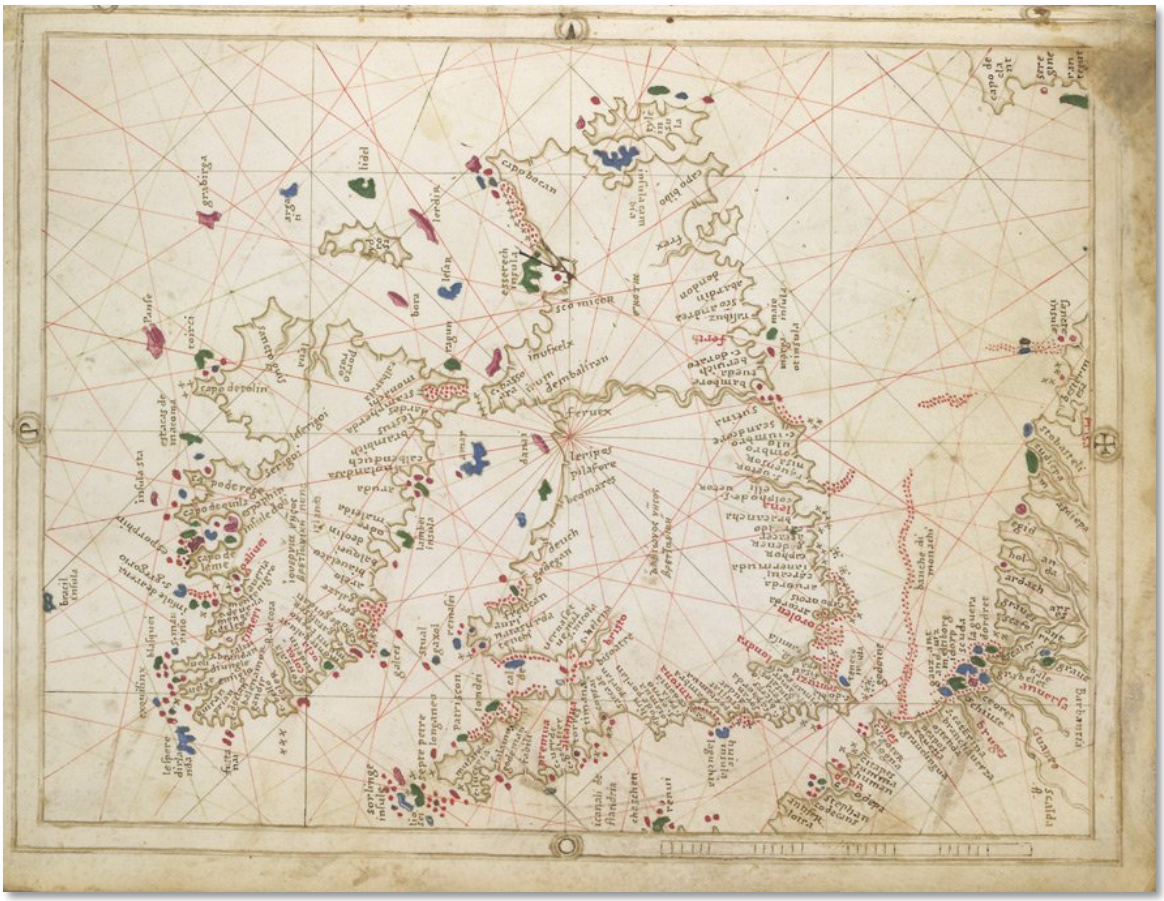
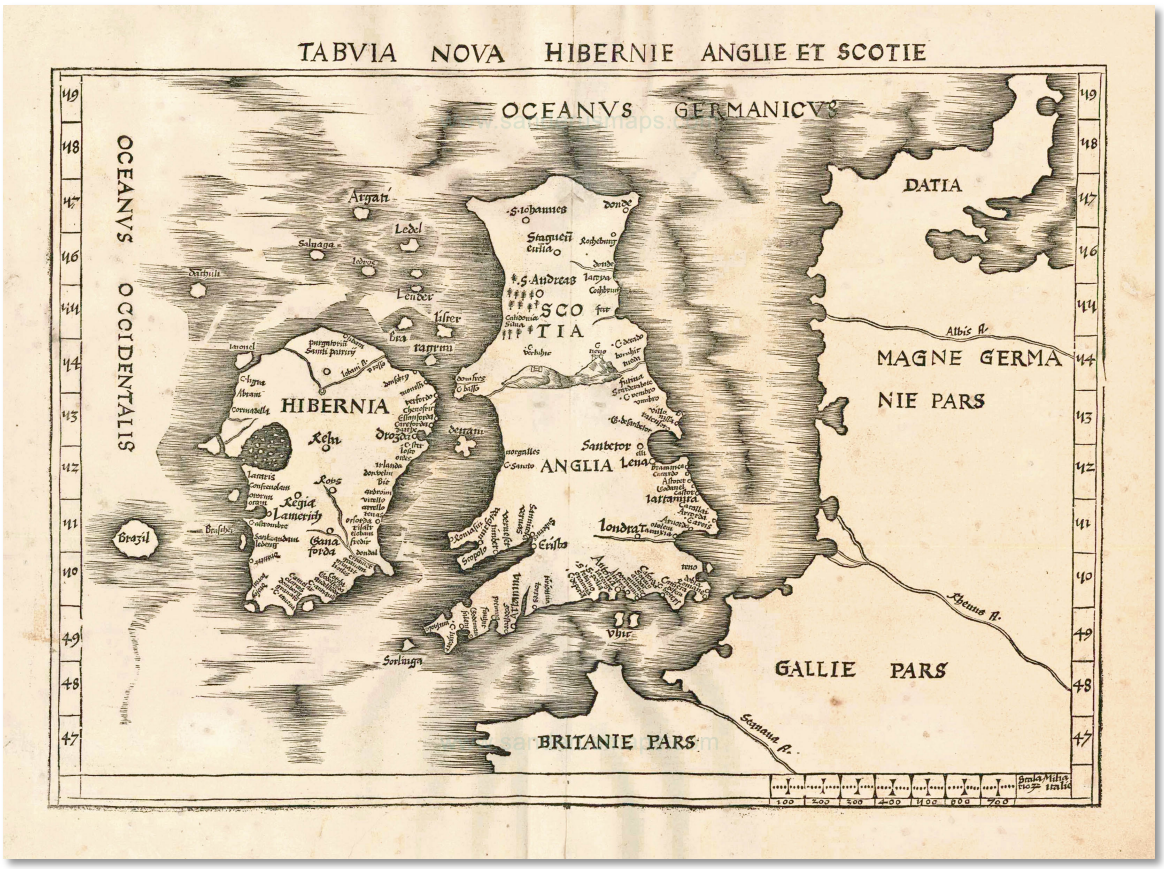
Ptolemaic map of the British Isles (2nd century, printed in 1486)
It was typical of maps based upon Ptolemy to represent the northern part of Britannia (Scotland) as extending eastward

5.20

British Isles on the chart of the western coast of Europe, 1490, Cornaro Atlas



Portolan chart of the British Isles by Maggiolo Vesconte, 1510



Tabula Nova Hibernie Anglie et Scotie by Martin Waldseemüller, 1513, 14x20 inches

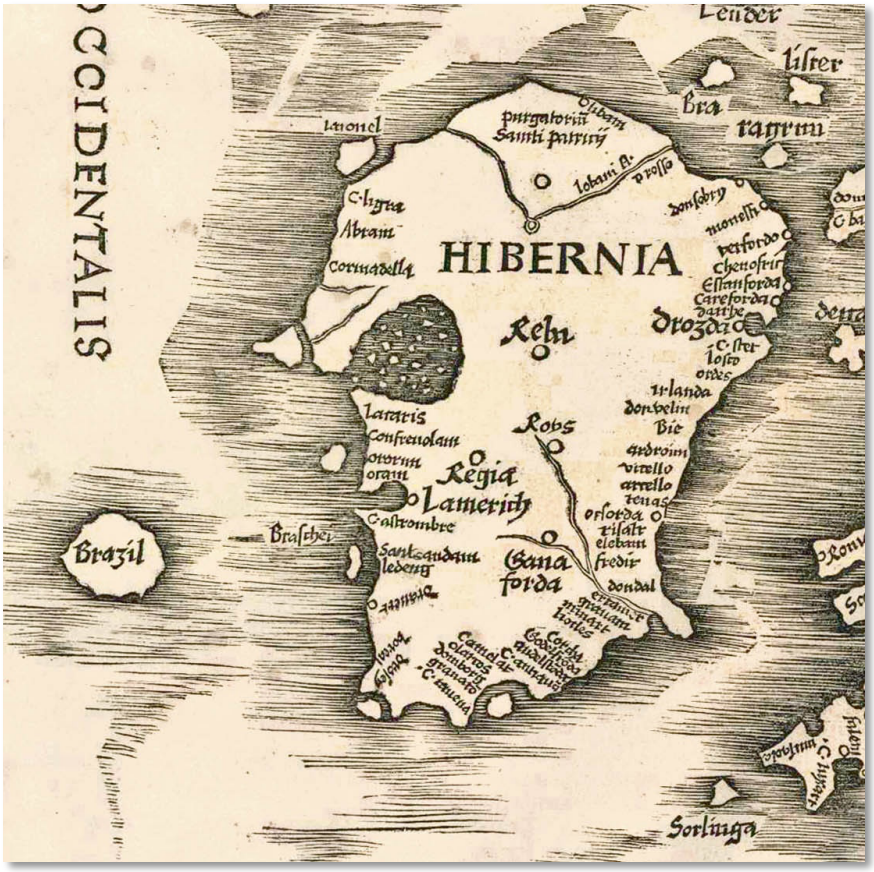
Waldseemüller used as his sources one or more 14th century Italian *portolani* charts but without necessarily taking advantage of the most up-to-date information available. It was the first printed, separate map of the British Isles that was not based on the classical geography of Ptolemy, but on roughly contemporaneous sources. Of particular interest is the island of *Brazil* off the southwest coast of Ireland that, although purely a mythical conception, continued to appear on many maps for the next 200 years. So while Waldseemüller did not avail himself of the most-up-to-date sources, he did employ a geography that was derived from the actual experience of mariners. R.W. Shirley states that it was Waldseemüller himself who was the author of this map.

As would be expected, the southern coasts of England and Ireland, which would have been encountered most often by mariners of the day, are much more accurately represented than the northern regions, which are crudely approximated. There are over 25 place names in southern England and at least that many in southern and eastern Ireland, though not all of them are identifiable in relation to current locales. Shirley provides a key giving the modern equivalents for several of the English place names. London (*londra)* is prominently shown, as is the Thames River though it is not named. Some earlier maps showed a waterway separating England and Scotland; this area has been updated by Waldseemüller, who shows mountains there.

The relatively large number of place names along the Irish coast is reflective of the amount of trade conducted with these areas at the time. Also in Ireland, in the far north, the map shows the legendary entrance to purgatory, Saint Patrick's *purgatorium*.

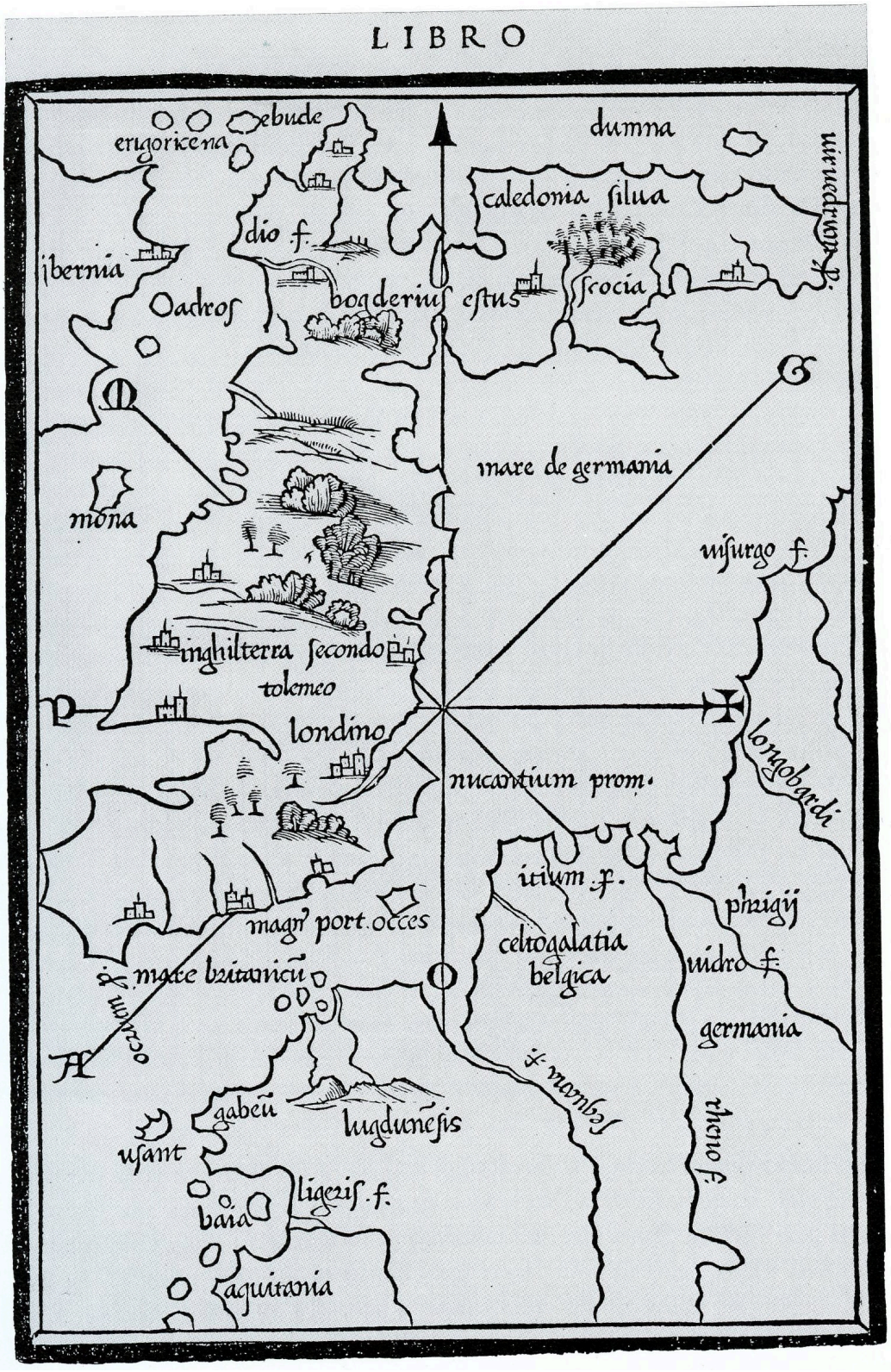
Generally, Ireland is depicted in an inverted pear shape, as it usually appeared on portoIan charts.

Waldseemüller's edition of Ptolemy's *Geography*, in which this map appeared, is considered one of the two or three most important editions of a work that appeared in numerous editions as late as the 18th century. His presentation of Ptolemy's text was the most authoritative to date.



In early editions of the *Geographia*, maps of Great Britain show Scotland twisted eastward, at right angles to England. The 1513 edition corrected this, giving Scotland its true north-south orientation, and this plate shows Britain in recognizable form, although there are many inaccuracies. An interesting feature is the inclusion of a mythical island of *Brazil*, west of Ireland. The presence of islands in the western ocean was accepted by early navigators, and *Brazil* appears in the great *Catalan Atlas* of 1375 *(#235).*

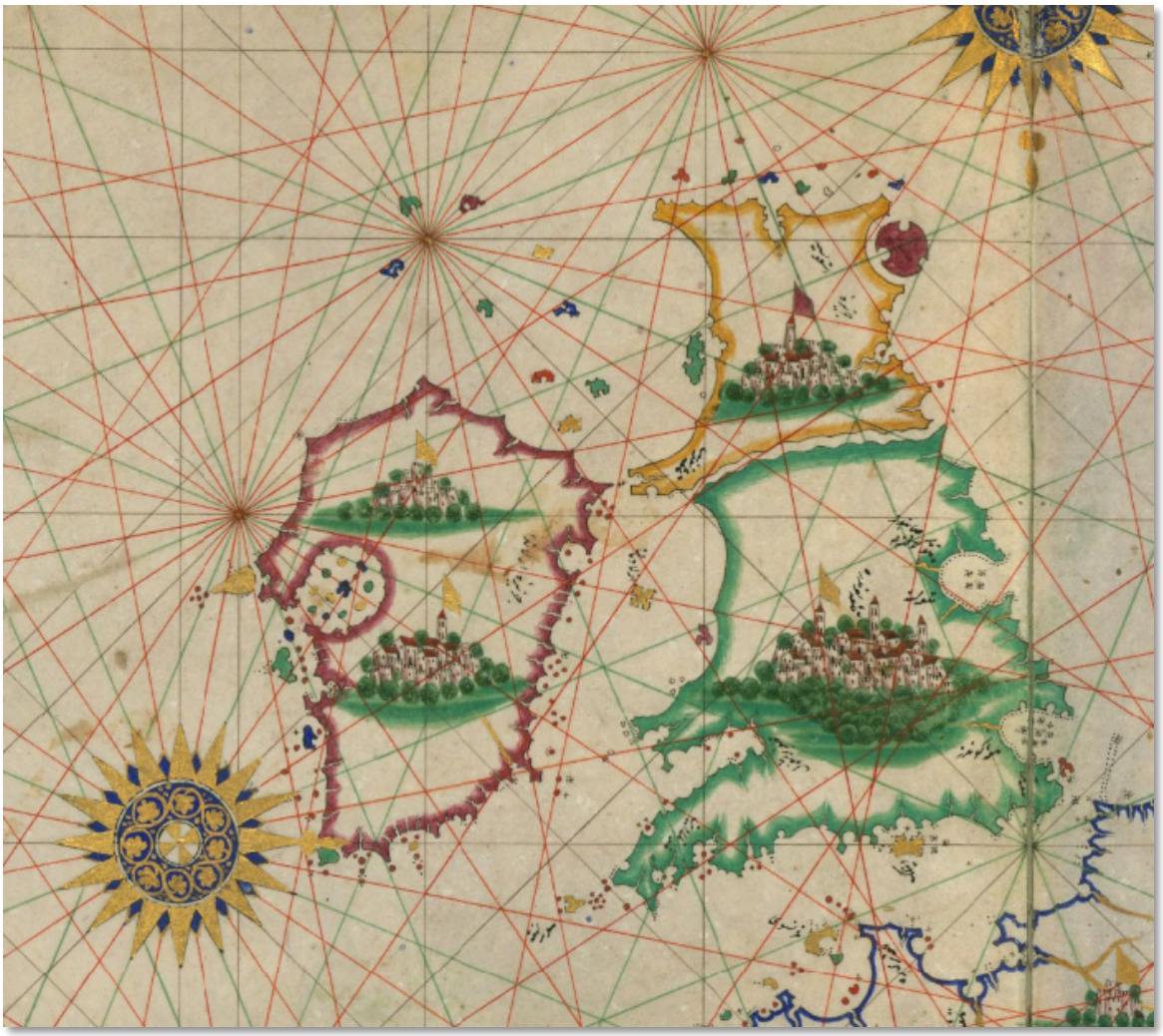
The western isles of Scotland are oddly dispersed, but *Ragran* is probably Arran, and farther south in the Irish Sea the Isle of Man, in its heraldic shape, is marked. Northwest of Ireland is *Thule* (Shetland), the most northerly point for which Ptolemy had a coordinate: here it is placed too far south and west. It is evident that this map was compiled from mariners' charts, for towns that were important ports are indicated in bold lettering, among them King's Lynr on the Wash (*Lena*), Bristol (*Eristo*), Teignmouth (*Artanina*) and London (*Londra*). The only river marked in England is the Thames, but the Elbe, the Rhine and the Seine are shown in Europe, and Ireland (*Hibernia*) is heavily annotated. In Scotland, the Caledonian Forest, one of the most ancient in Europe, appears, today only a remnant exists.



England and Scotland from the Book of Benedetto Bordone, 1528

England and Scotland from the Book of Benedetto Bordone, 1539
William L. Clements Library, University of Michigan

5.20



Turkish Maritime Atlas

Walters manuscript W.660 is an illuminated and illustrated maritime atlas, referred to as the Walters Deniz atlasi. It is an early Ottoman atlas, perhaps dating to the 10th century AH/AD 16th. The work contains eight double-page charts executed on parchment. Four of the maps show the Mediterranean, Aegean, and Black seas. There is also a world map and a chart of the Indian Ocean. The various geographical names are written in black Nasta'liq script. A distinguishing feature of this atlas is the detailed approach to representing such features as city vignettes. Here Scotland is separated from England and has a flat northern coast and the Purgatory of St Patrick [Galway Bay?] is dominant

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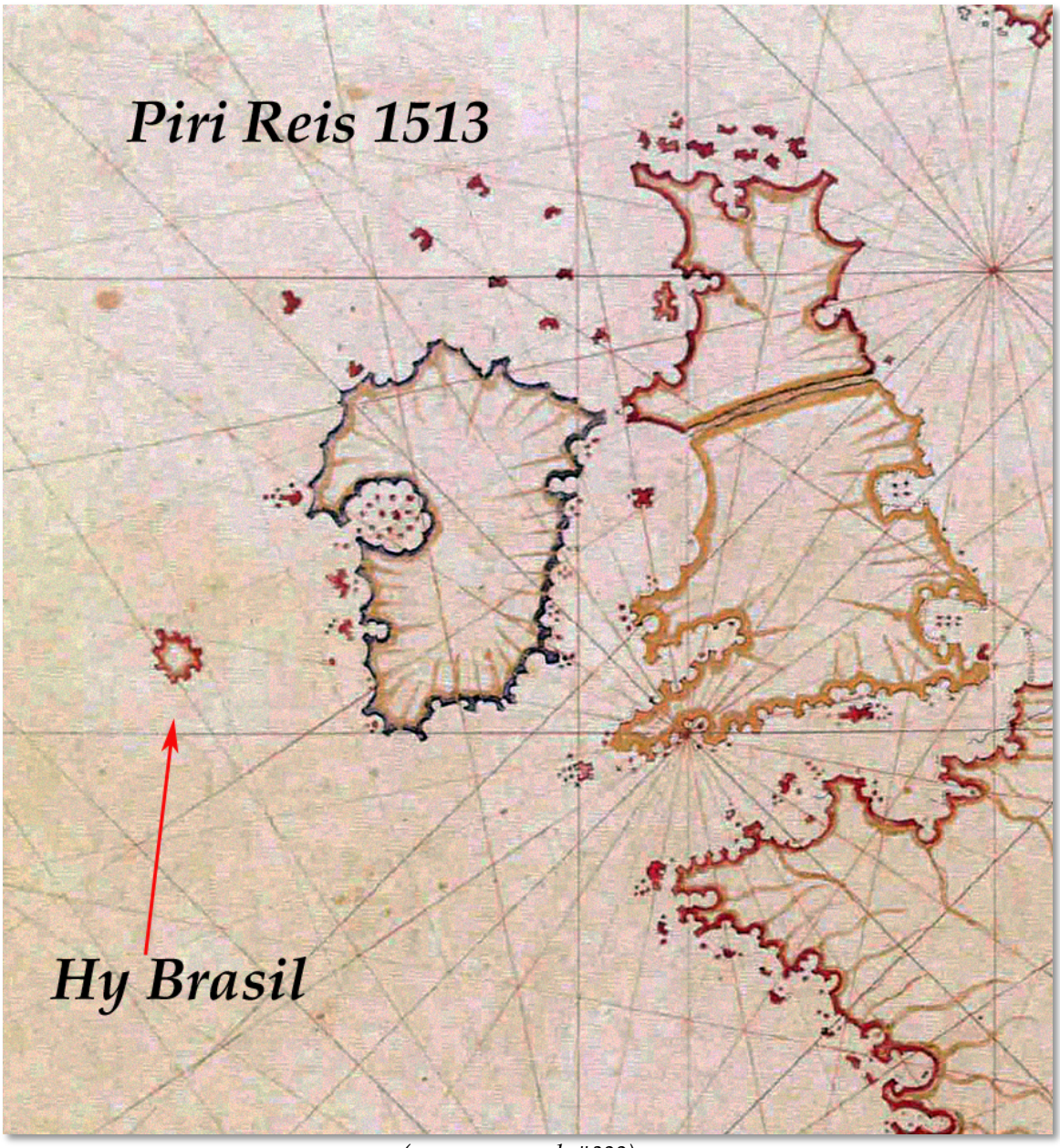

(see monograph #322)

King Henry's map of the British Isles, 1534

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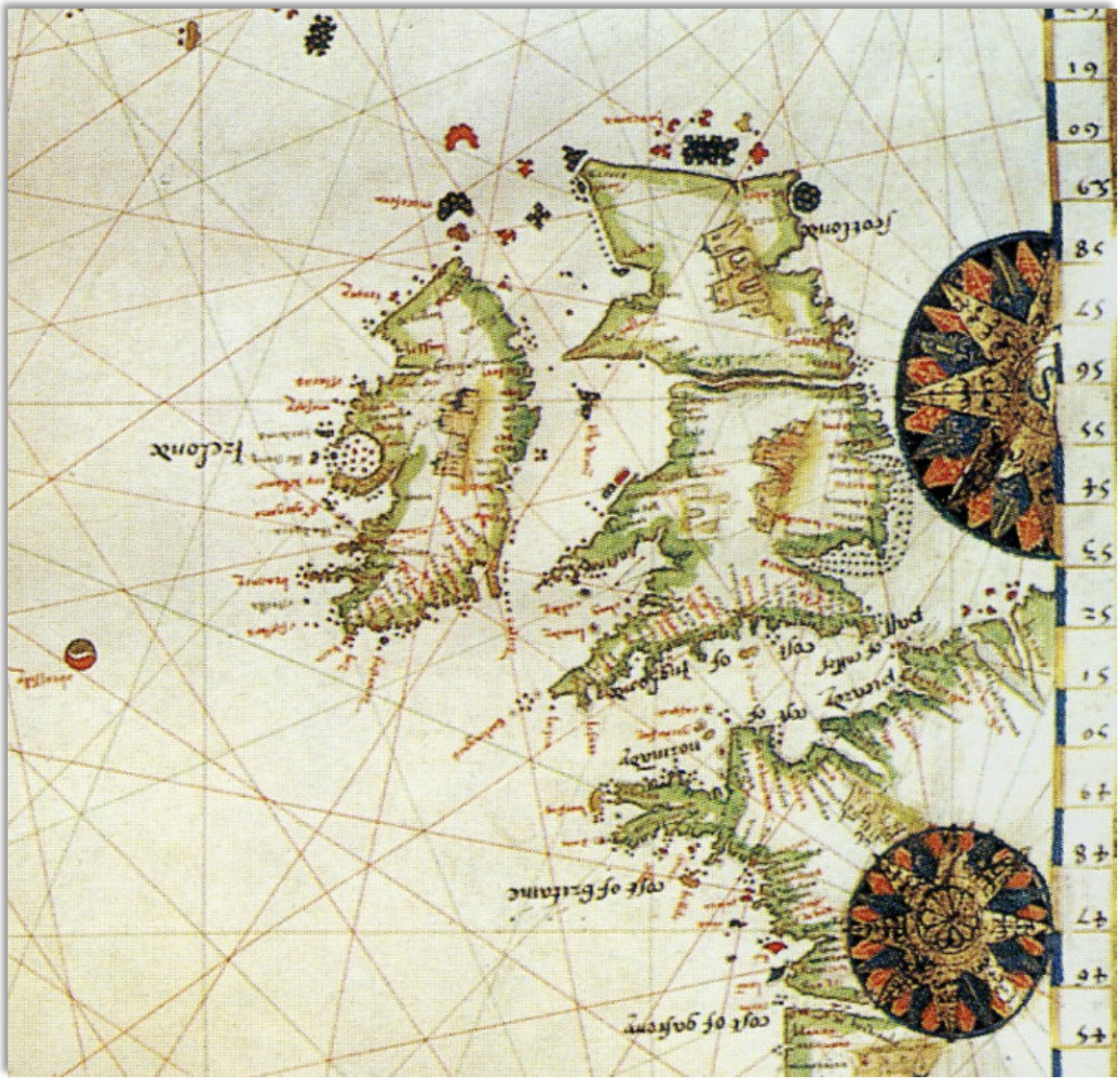

The Boke of Idrography (Atlantic Ocean), 1542, by Jean Rotz re-oriented with North at the top

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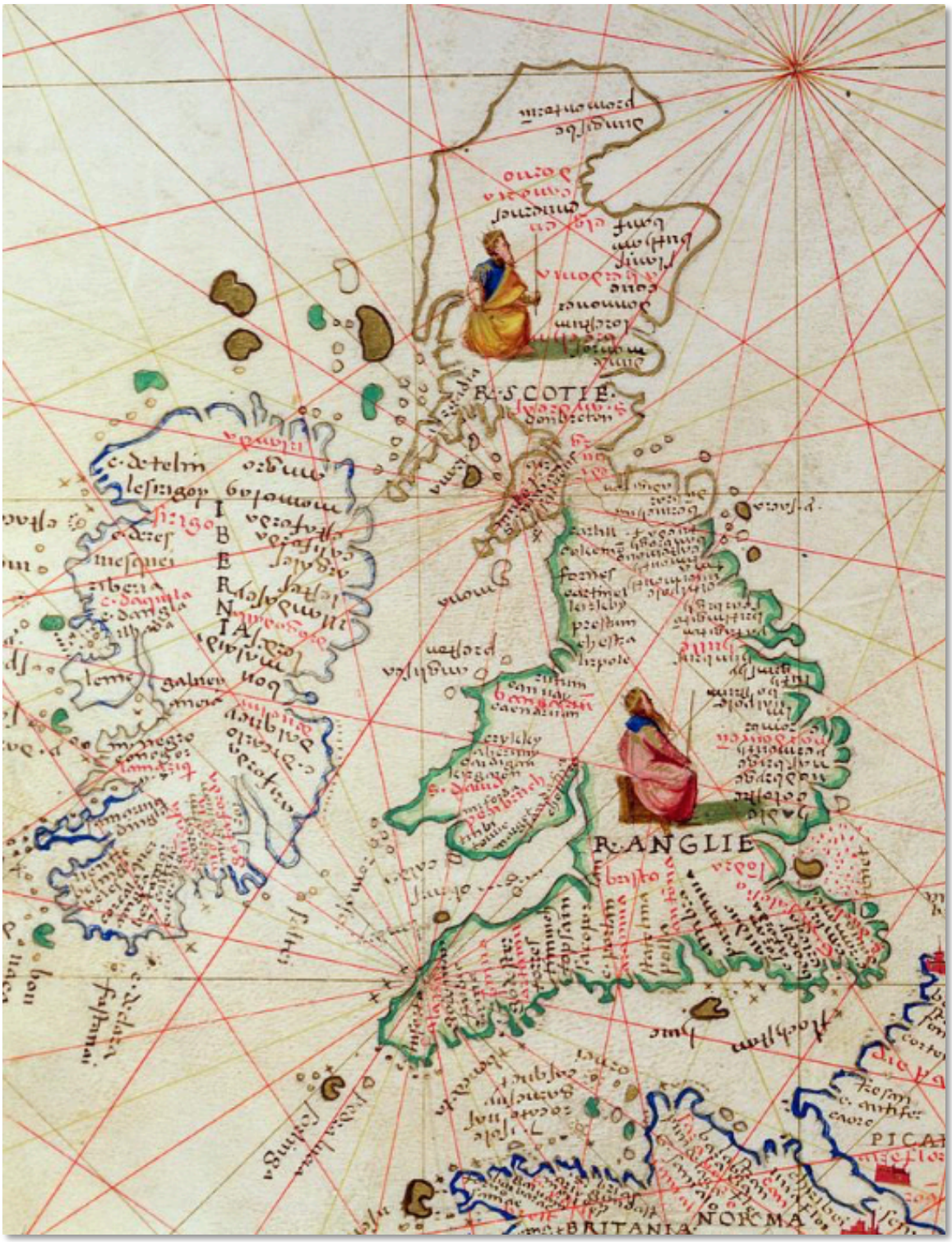
The British Isles on a 1544 map by Battista Agnese

5.20

Another version of the British Isles by Agnese, 1544

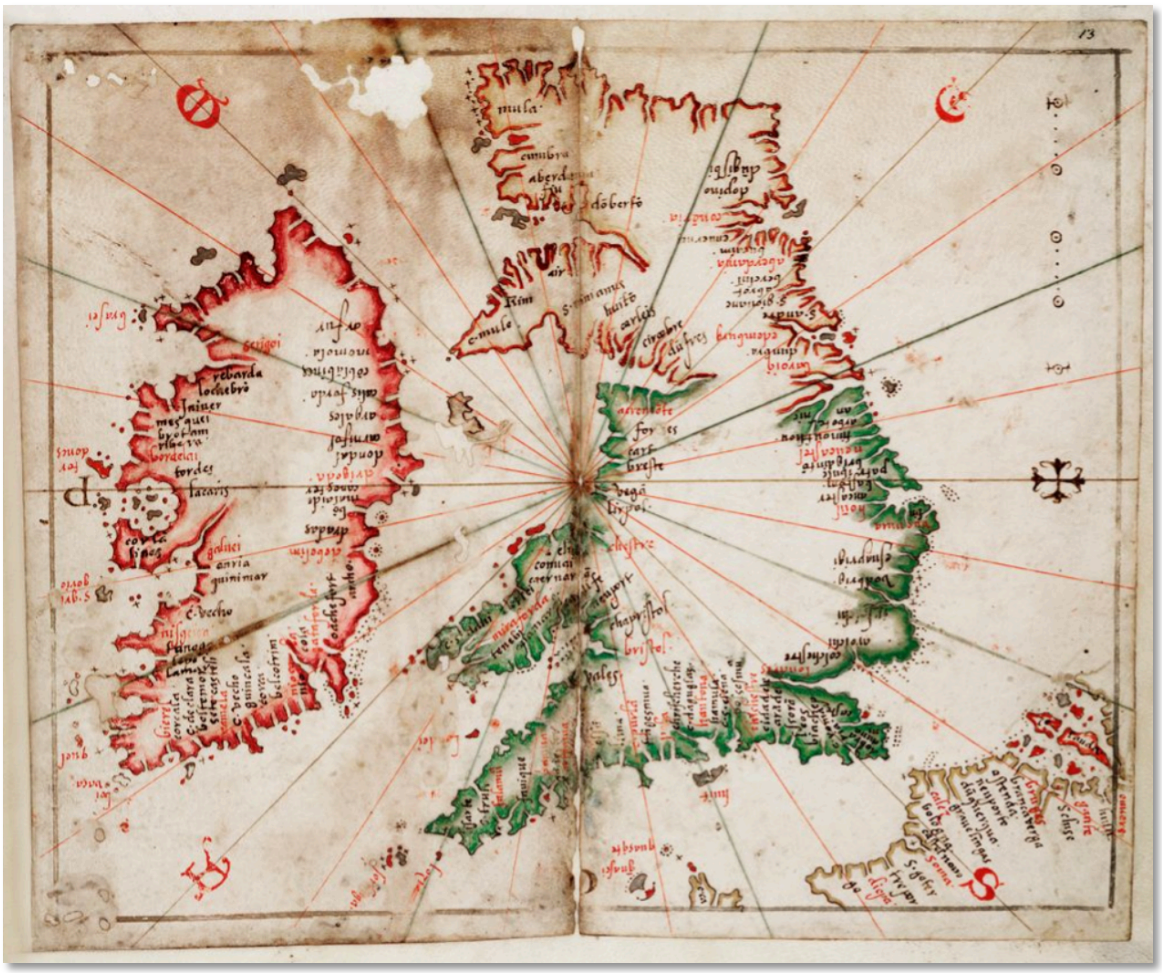
5.20



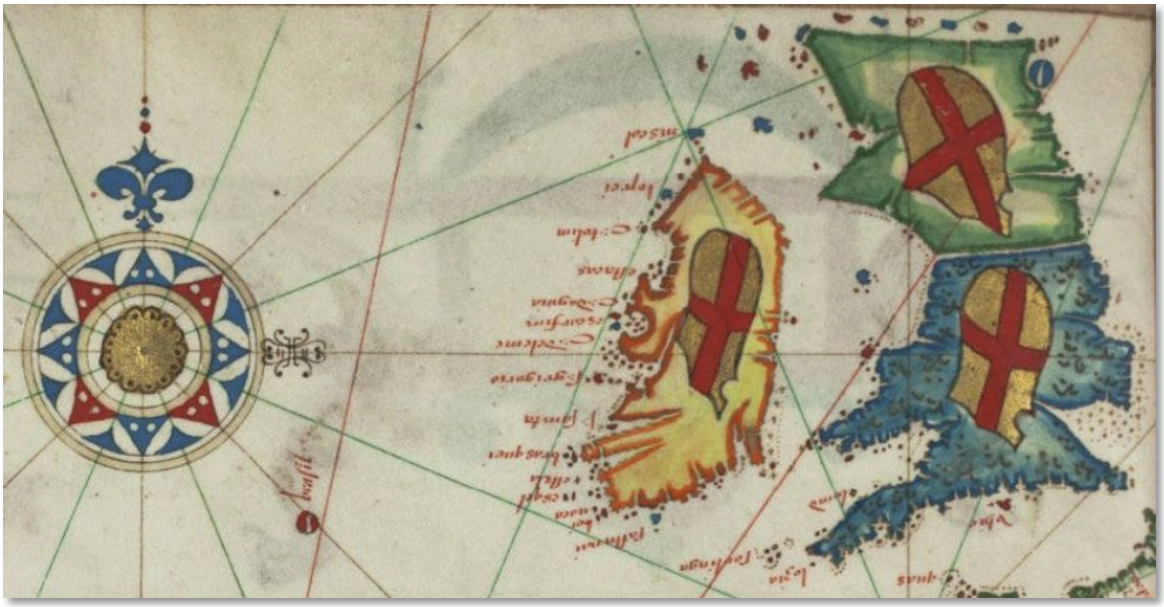
Yet another version of the British Isles by Battista Agnese, 1553

The British Isles by George Lily, 1546

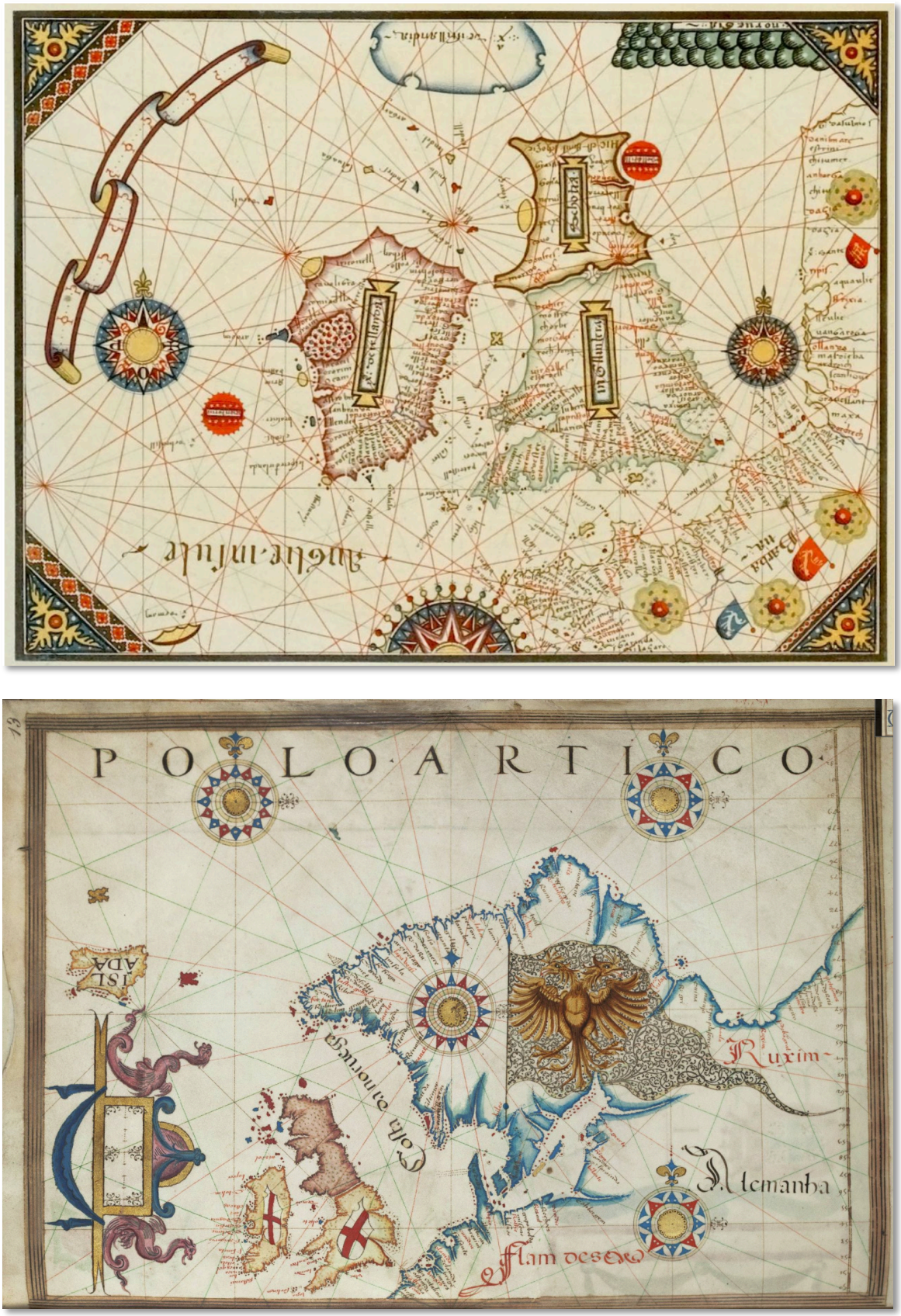
Oriented with West at the top. Note the different shape of Ireland compared with the previous contemporary renderings – the large west-coast of Ireland's Galway Bay is missing and the west coast of Scotland is populated with many islands representing the Hebrides. In concluding his learned study of this map, historian Edward Lynam stated that "Lily's map may ... be regarded as the last and greatest cartographical work of pre-Reformation England. And whatever were the circumstances in which it was made and whatever was its purpose, it can be claimed that this original and artistic map ... was the work which inspired all later maps of England." Not only English cartographers, but Italians as well were thus inspired by the map of 1546. No less than eight copies or piracies are known, no one of which is signed. The original plate was engraved in Italy, and five of the known "derivatives stem from either Venice or Rome."



British Isles, 1550, Joan Martines



Sebastião Lobes. 1565, Chart of the Atlantic coast of Europe and Northern Africa, 1565



Sebastião Lobes. 1565, Chart of Scandinavia and the British Islands

Des Kuenigreich EngeUandt mit dem anstossenden Reich SchottIand so vor Zeiten Albion und Britannia haben geheissen" Kingdom of England with neighboring Scotland
Hand-colored woodcut. Published in "Cosmographia" by Sebastian Muenster, 1550
East-oriented map of England, the southern parts of Scotland and parts of Ulster in Northern Ireland. In the distance: The Continental coastline France.

Atlas by Diogo Homen (Occidental Europe), 1559, 44 x 58.6 cm
Bibliotheque Nationale, Paris

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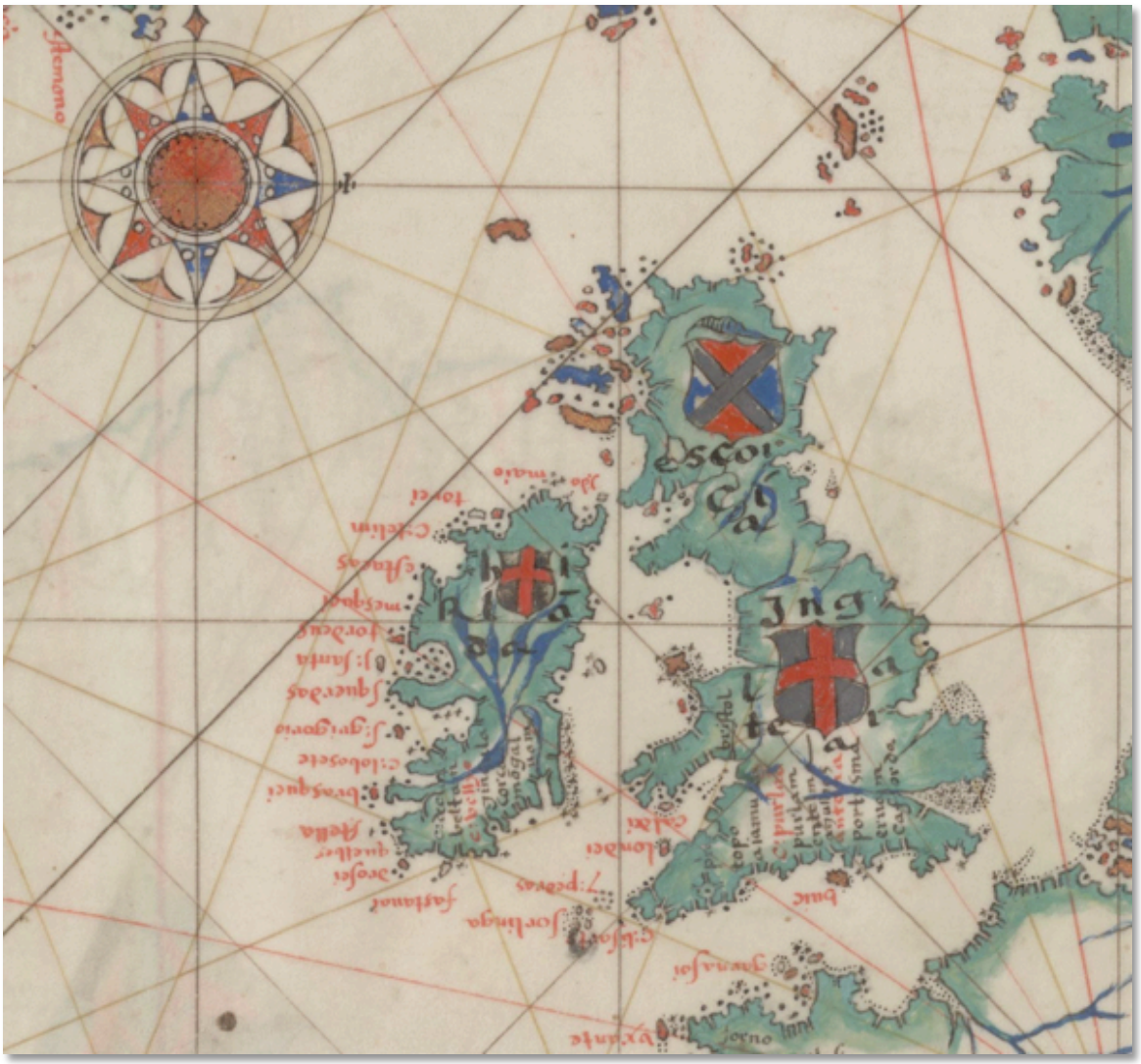
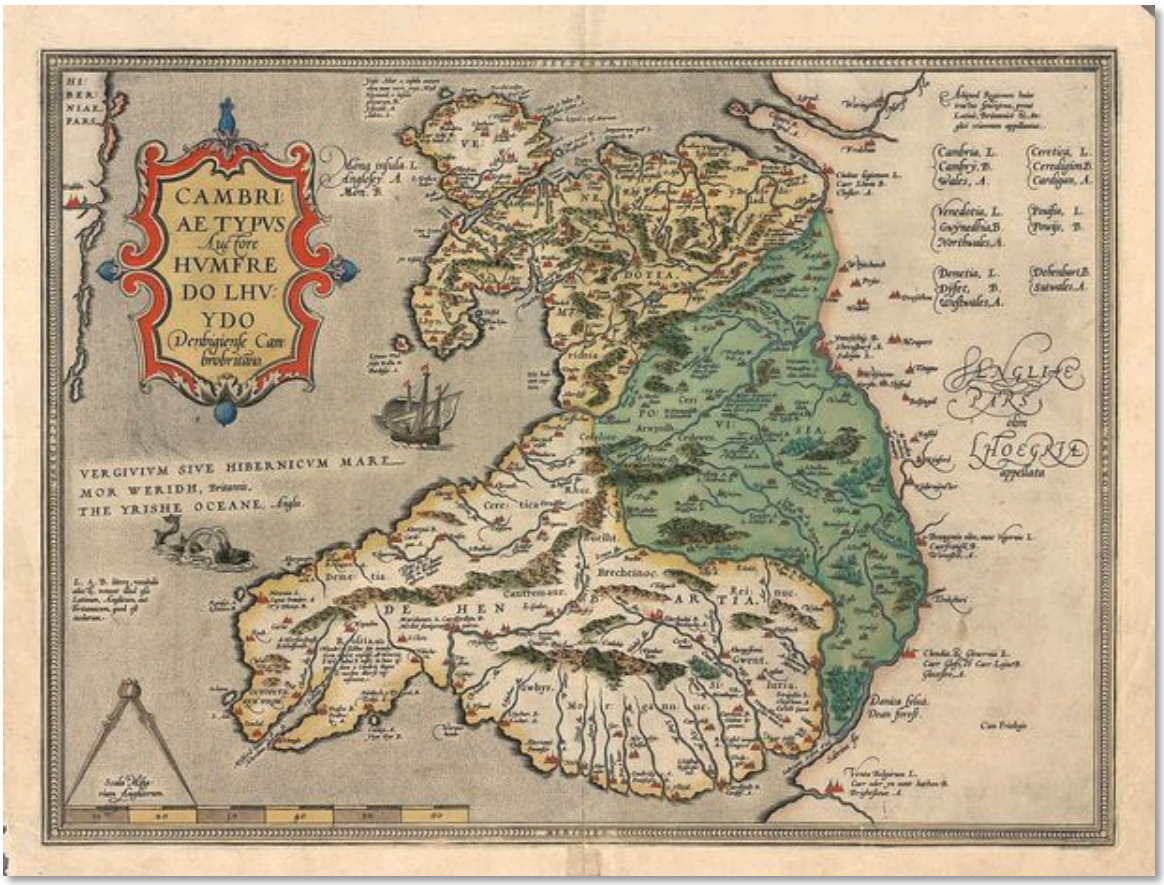


British Isles in the Bartolomeu Velho nautical atlas, on the chart of the western Mediterranean, Atlantic coasts of Europe and north Africa, 1560

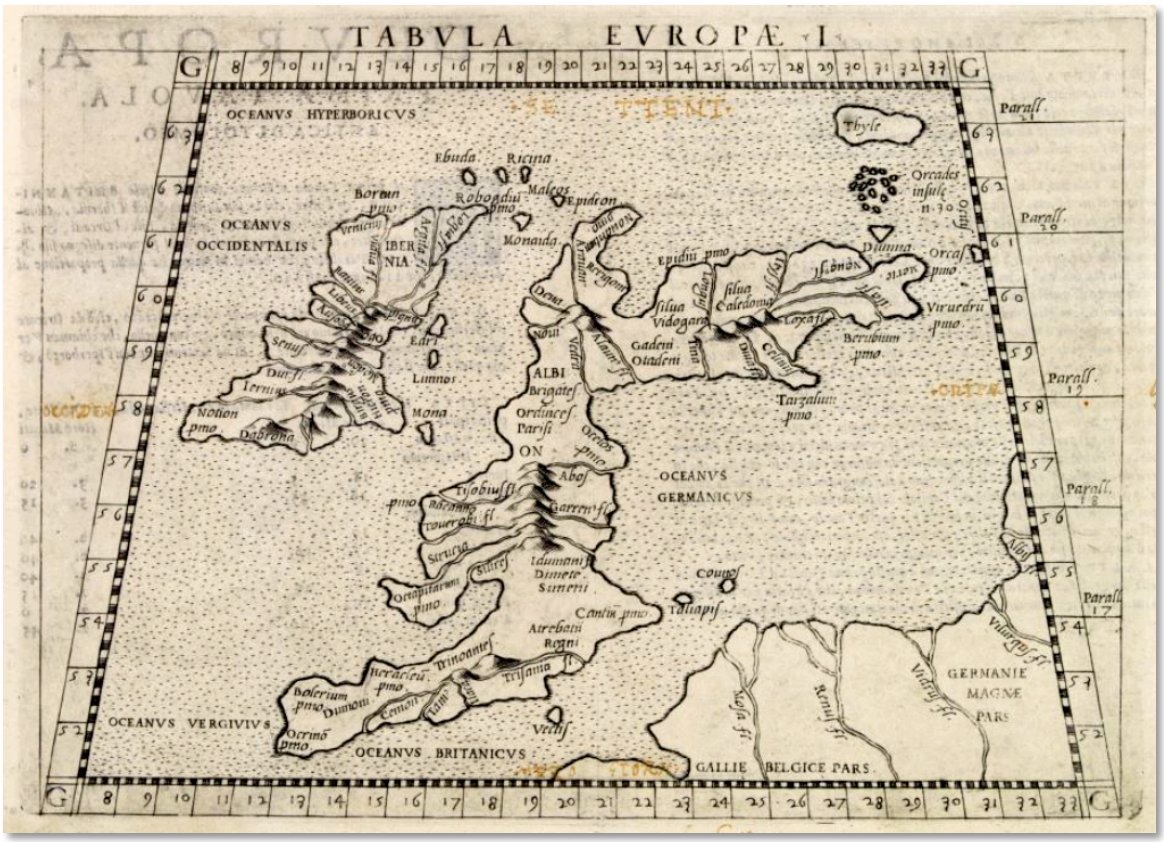
Inglaterra [England], Scotia [Scotland] and Galler Pro [Wales] in Islario general de todas las islas del mundo [General atlas of all the islands in the world] by Seville cosmographer Alonso de Santa Cruz, 1560.

Irlanda [Ireland]] in Islario general de todas las islas del mundo [General atlas of all the islands in the world] by Seville cosmographer Alonso de Santa Cruz, 1560.

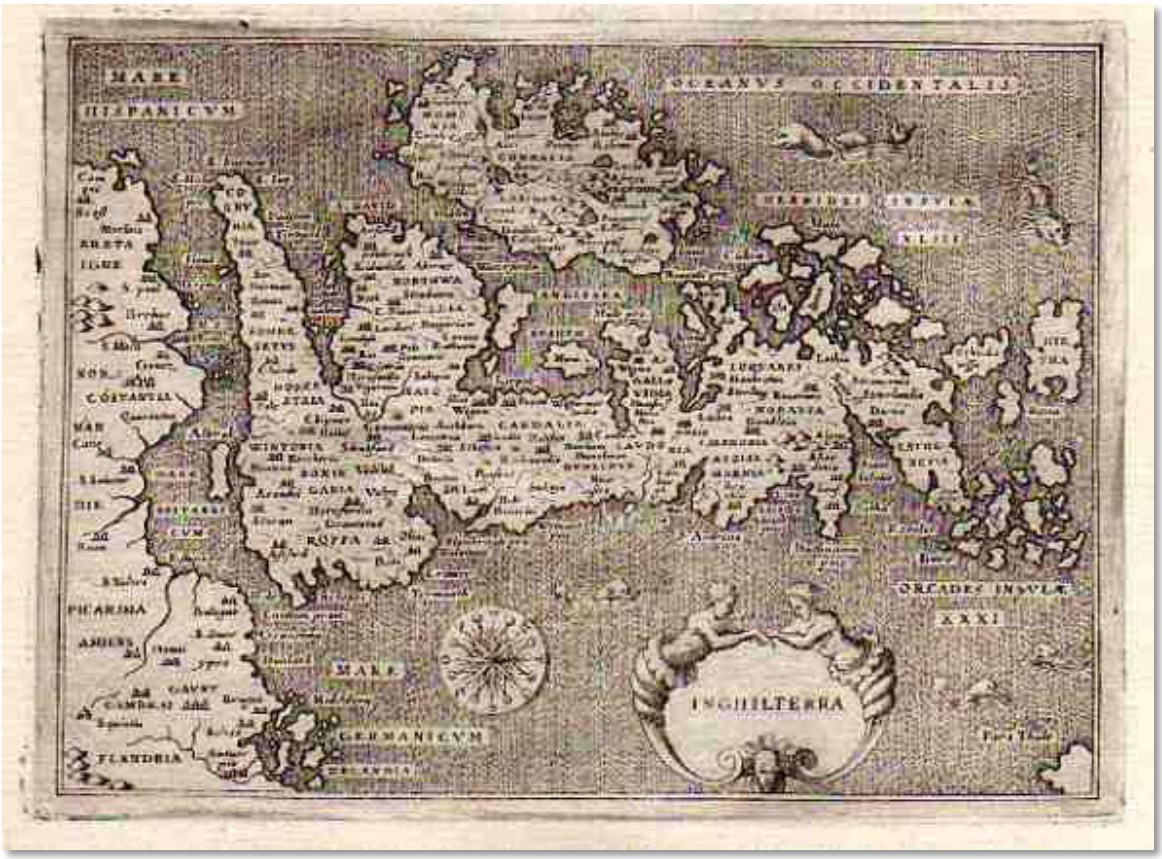


Cambriae Typus by Humphrey Llwyd (1573)

This is the first published map of Wales as a nation, but the Wales it depicts is a historical nation of independent principalities and not the country conquered and annexed by the English.



Tabula Europae I [British Isles] using the Ptolemaic model by Giovanni Ruscelli, 1574

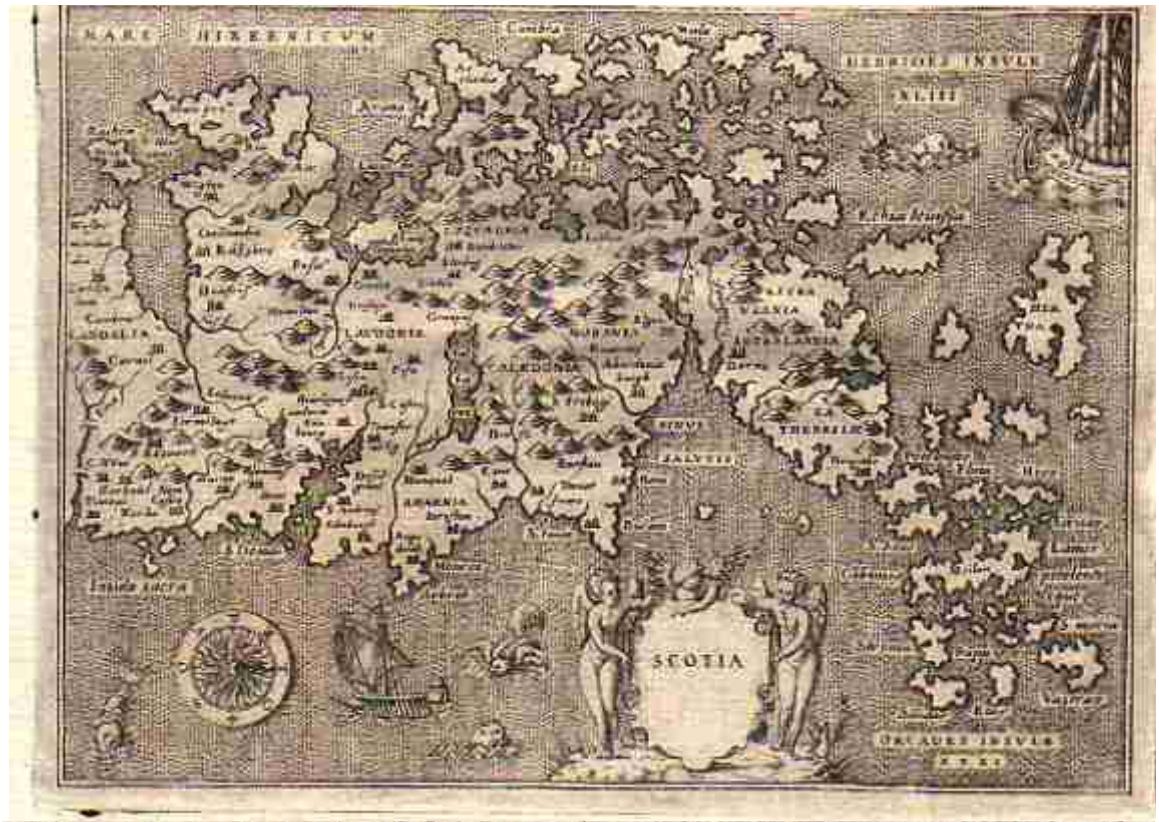


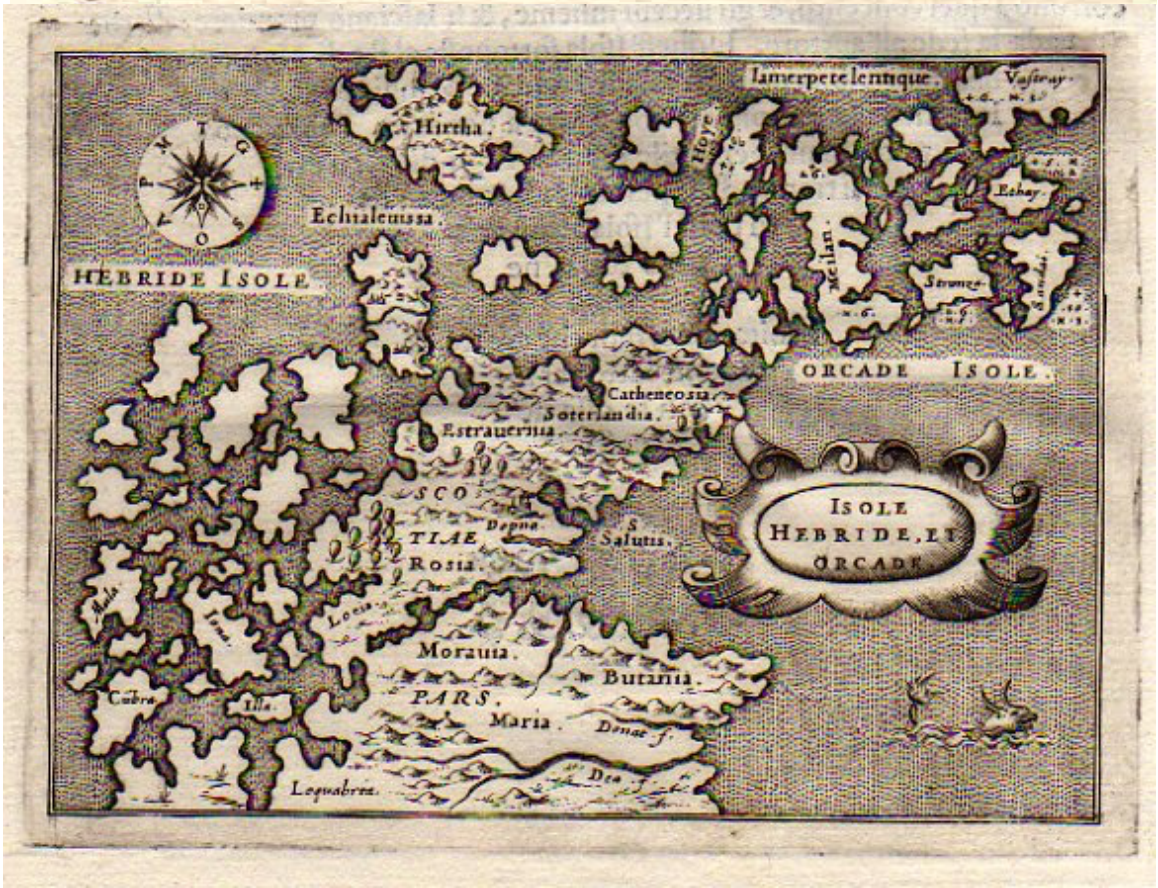
British Isles Descrittione Dell'Isola D'Inghilterra
Tomaso Porcacchi, 1572/1575 Venice

This west-oriented map is from 'L'Isole Piu Famose Del Mondo', Porcacchi's famous isolario, containing maps of the islands of the world.

Below are separate maps of Scotland and Ireland from this collection by Porcacchi

5.20


MARE HIBERNICVM
HEBRIDES INSVLAE
XLIII
LAVDONIA
CALEDONIA
SINVS
SALVTIS
SCOTIA
ORCADES INSVLAE
XXXI

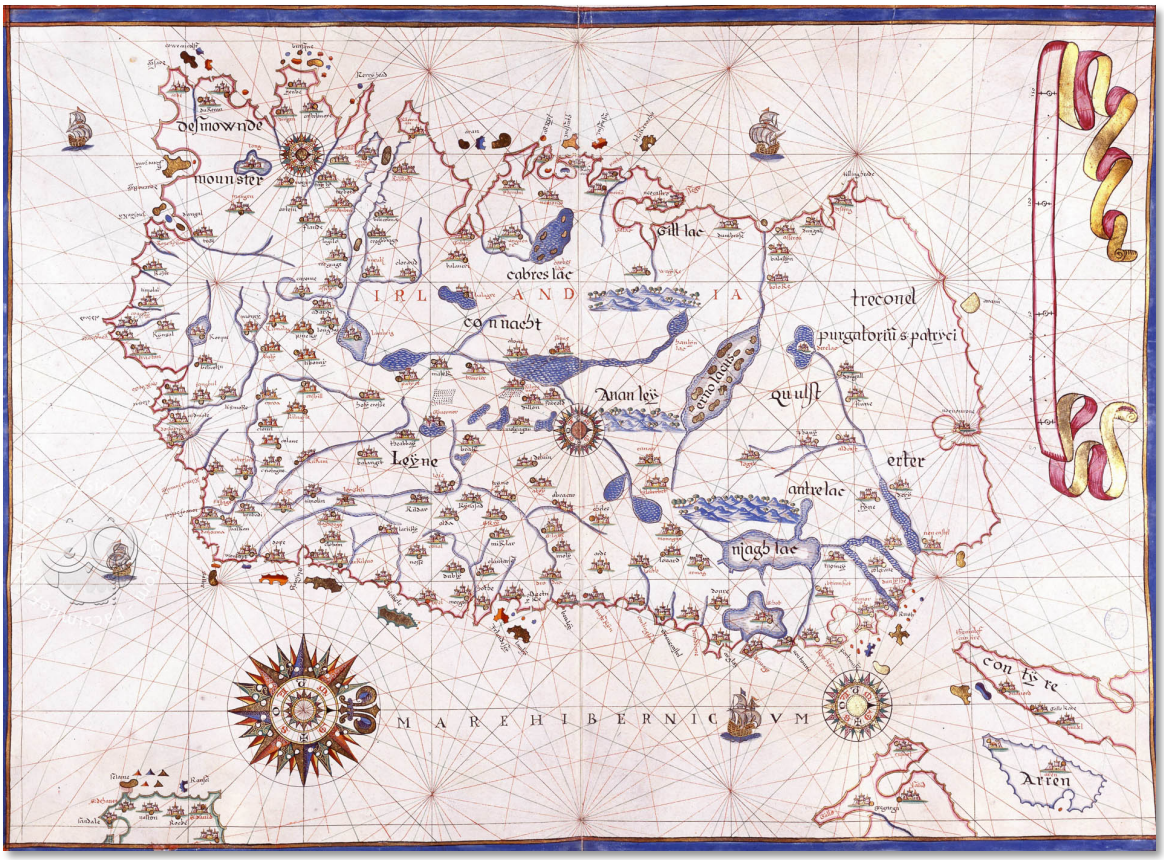

lamerpete lennique.
Vasfray.
Hirtha.
Echialeussa.
HEBRIDE ISOLE.
Mclan.
ORCADE ISOLE.
Catheneosia.
Soterlandia.
Estrauernia.
SCO
TIAE
Rosia.
Salutis.
ISOLE
HEBRIDE, ET
ORCADE
Morauia.
Butania.
PARS.
Maria.
Donae f.
Dea.
Loquabrea.
Iona
Cubra
Ila.

5.20

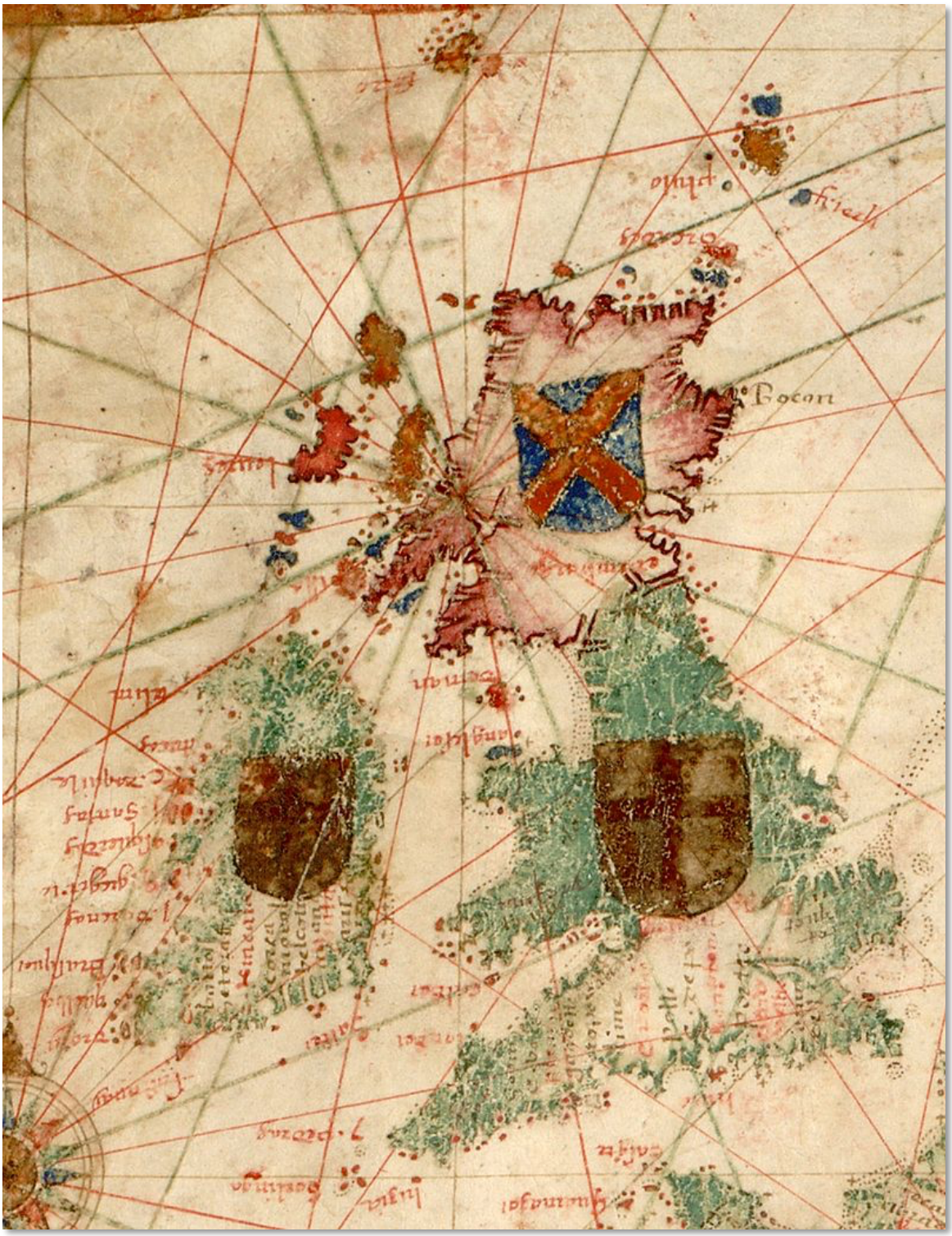

OCEANVS OCCIDENTALIS
IRLAN-
DA-
CONNACIA
OCEANVS
HYPERBOPEVS
HVLTONIA
NIGISA

Das Under Buch Beschreibung Engellandts Und Schottlandts
British Isles by Sebastian Münster, 1578

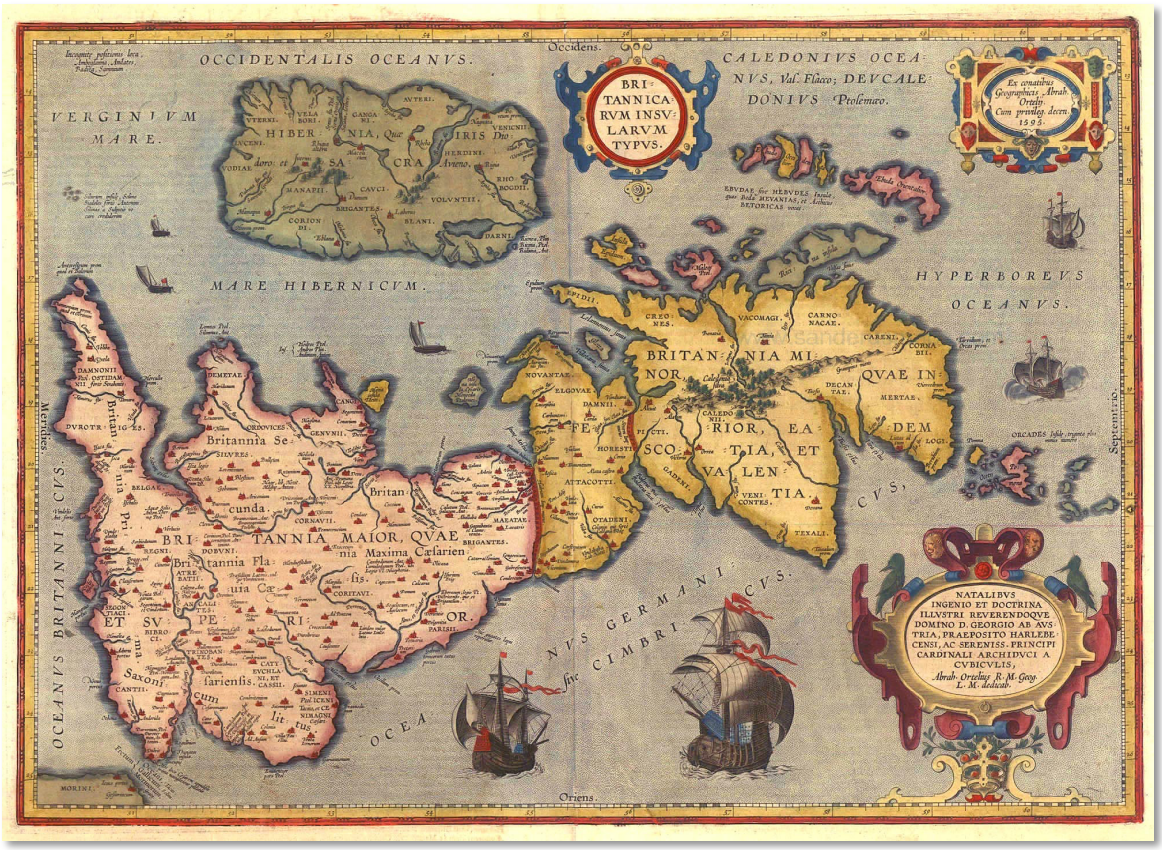
This unusual woodblock map of the British Isles was first included in the 1578 edition of Münster's "Cosmography", according to R.W. Shirley, probably by the printer Heinrich Petri. II is based on Münster's own map but with some important differences; there are fewer place names shown in the southern part of the country, north is oriented to the top of the page (Münster's map oriented north to the left), and, perhaps most obviously, Scotland slants eastwards in a style reminiscent of Ptolemy- even though this is a supposedly "new" and "modern" map. Shirley suggests that this curious Scotland may not have been a reversion in geographical thinking, but instead the size of this page was just too small to include Scotland and the engraver found a practical solution.



Ireland by Joan Martines, Portolan Atlas, 1587



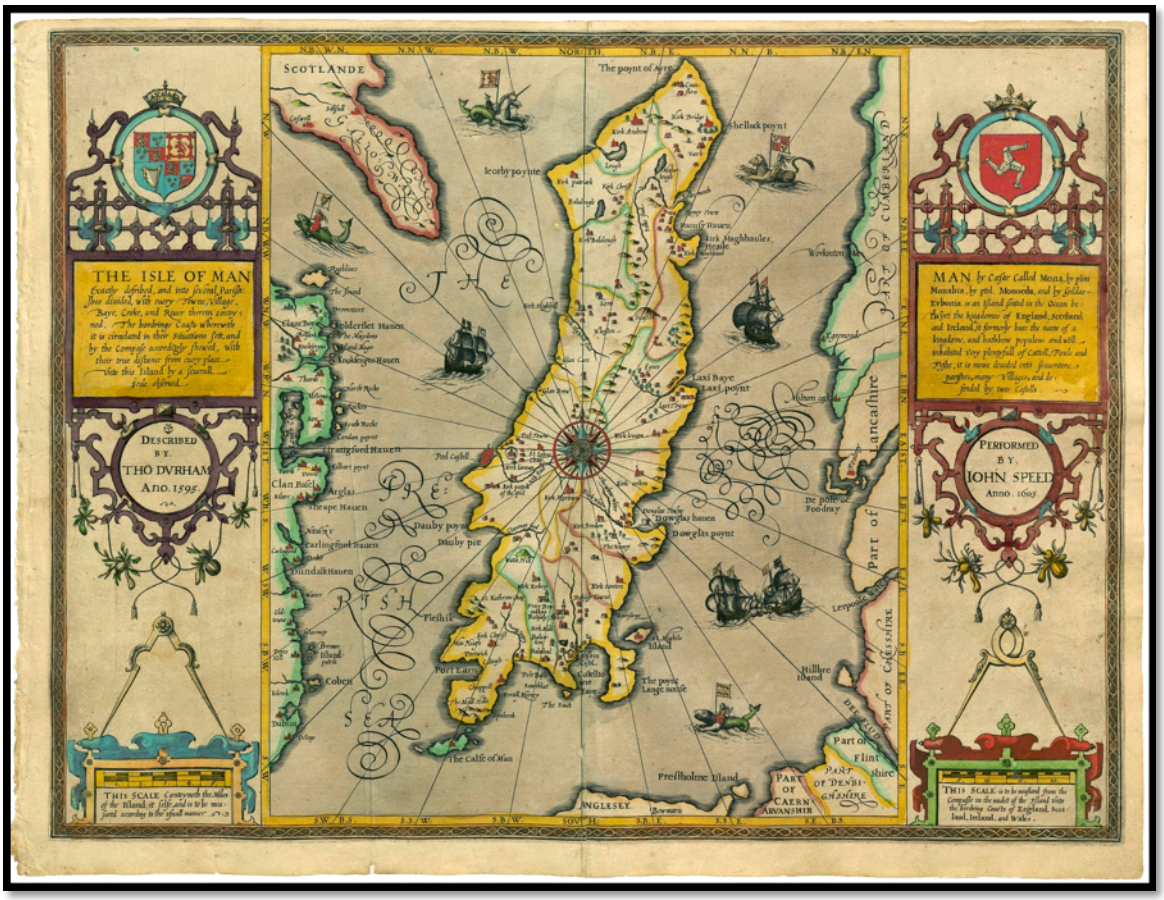
A section of the nautical chart of Mediterranean area, including Europe with British Isles and part of Scandinavia. Lisbon, ca. 1600 Inscribed on a scroll "Por Luis Te[ixe]ira em Lix[bo]a."



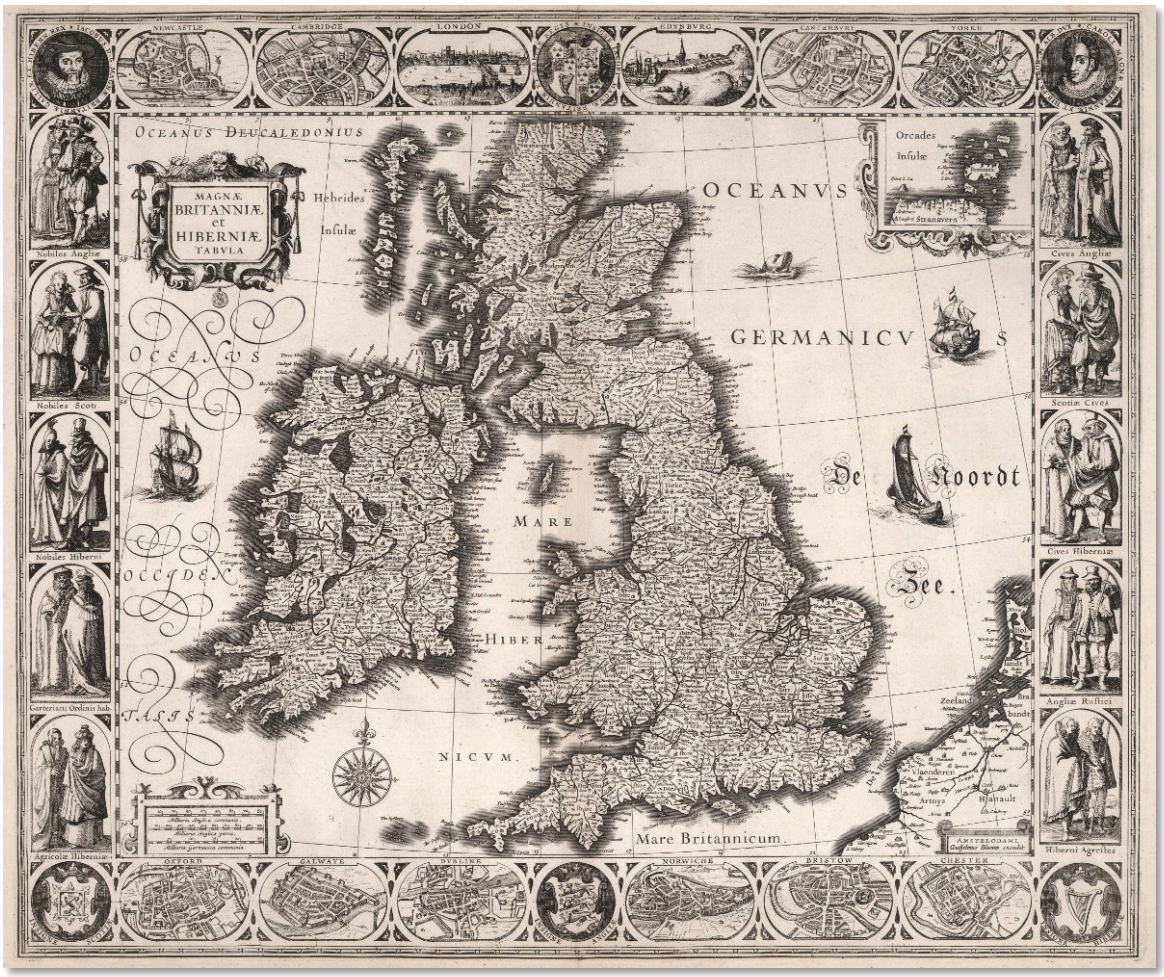
Britannicarum Insularum Typus by Abraham Ortelius,1609, oriented with West at the top.

Wales by John Speed, 1610

This map shows the 13 counties into which Wales was divided under the Act of Union in 1536. It is also notable for the views of 12 county towns that shows the development of urbanization beginning in this period.



The Isle of Man by John Speed, 1610

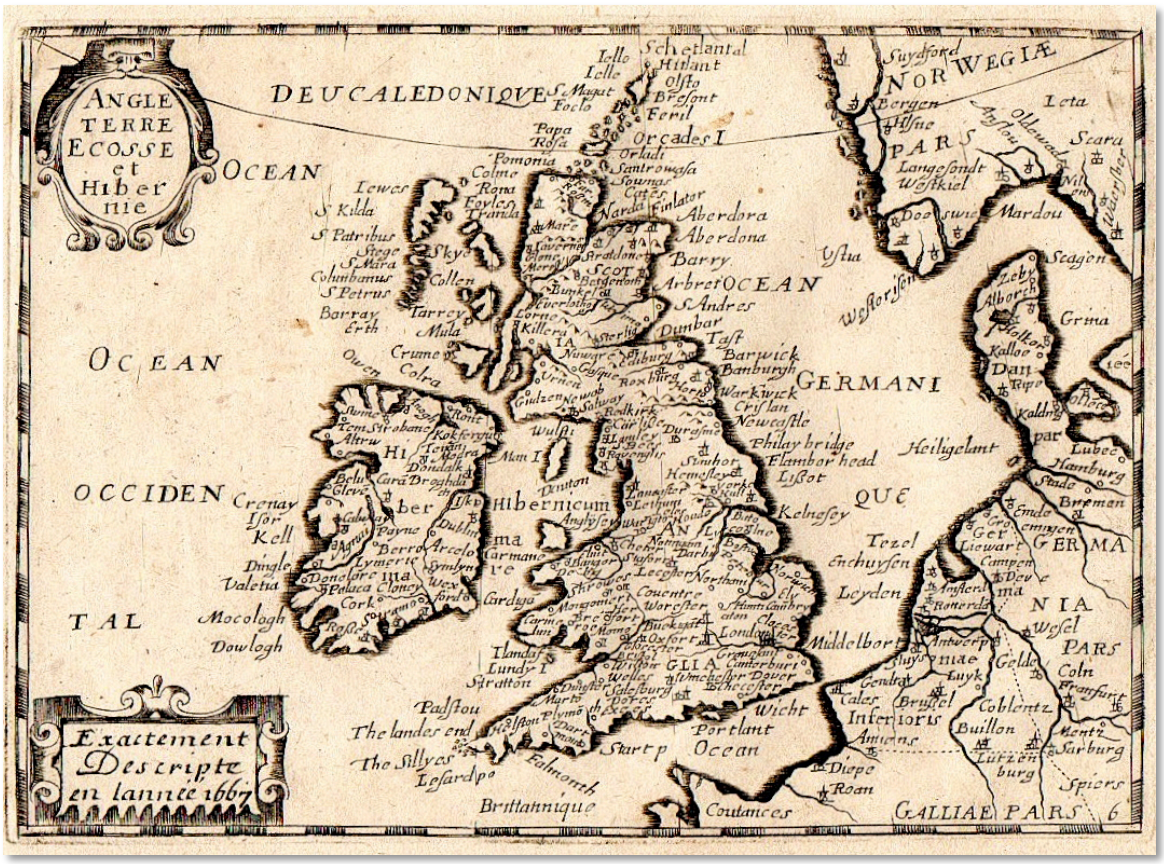


British Isles by John Speed, 1626

The map is surrounded with bird's eye views of cities such as Cambridge, London, Newcastle, Edinburg, York, Oxford, Norwich, Bristow, Chester, Canterbury, Dublin, and Galway
The inset displays the Orcades Insule

Insulae Albion et Hibernia in the Blaeu Atlas, 1654

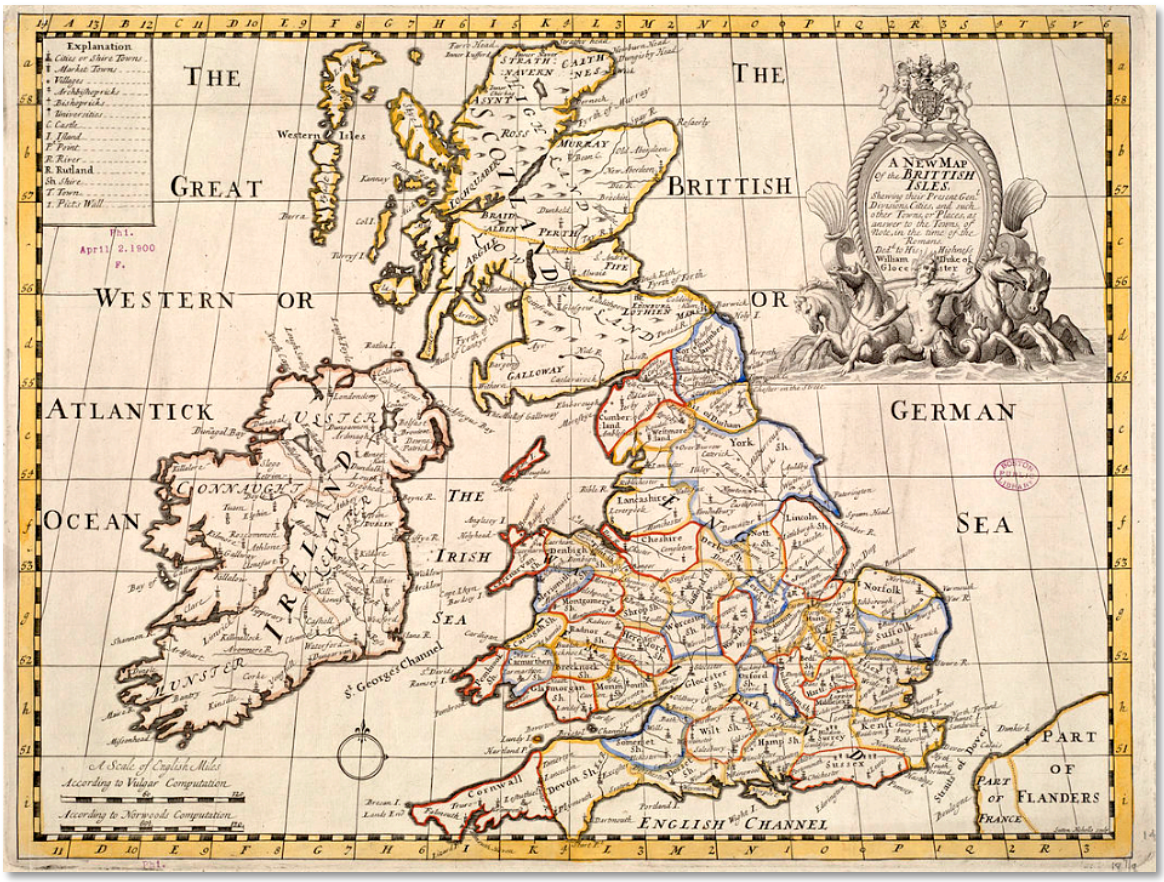
This Ptolemaic map of the British Isles shows ancient place names and divisions. Scotland is shown with its distinctive east-west orientation. As can be seen, these maps based upon Ptolemy's "Geography" continued to be printed long after more accurate renderings of the British Isles were available.



Angleterre Ecosse et Hibernie…Exactemen Descripte en Lannee, 1667

This is the only map of Great-Britain published by Joan Blaeu (1598-1673). The source of this map is a map by John Speed (1552-1629) from 1611. Nevertheless, the importance of this copy is often greater than the original. The vignettes on both sides of the map contain 14 miniatures in the style of the most important painters of the time: they portray 14 Saxonian sovereigns and their conversion to Christianity. The map was published in several atlases by Blaeu, 1676

5.20



A New Map of the British Isles, Edward Wells, 1719

5.20

The British Isles, John Tallis, 1851

5.20

Enland and Wales, John Tallis, 1851

5.20

Ireland by John Tallis, 1851

Brittania, 1791

Etching by James Gillray; published in London by Hannah Humphrey in 1791. This is a comic map of England formed by an old woman seated in profile to the left on the back of a dolphin-like monster, whose open mouth (right) represents the Thames River, the two points of its tail being "Lands End" and "Lizard Point". She holds a trident in her left hand. Her right hand (on which is a dove) and right foot form the north of Wales and the north of the Bristol Channel. The peak of her cap is "Berwick". Many other names are inscribed round the coast. The sea forms a background. Wright & Evans, in their 1851 book, *Historical and Descriptive Account of the Caricatures of James Gillray*, describe *Brittania* thus: "A rather ludicrous burlesque on the map of Great Britain, the work of some amateur artist, and etched by Gillray."

Geography Bewitched or, a Droll Caricature Map of Ireland, designed by Robert Dighton; published in London by Bowles & Carver in 1793

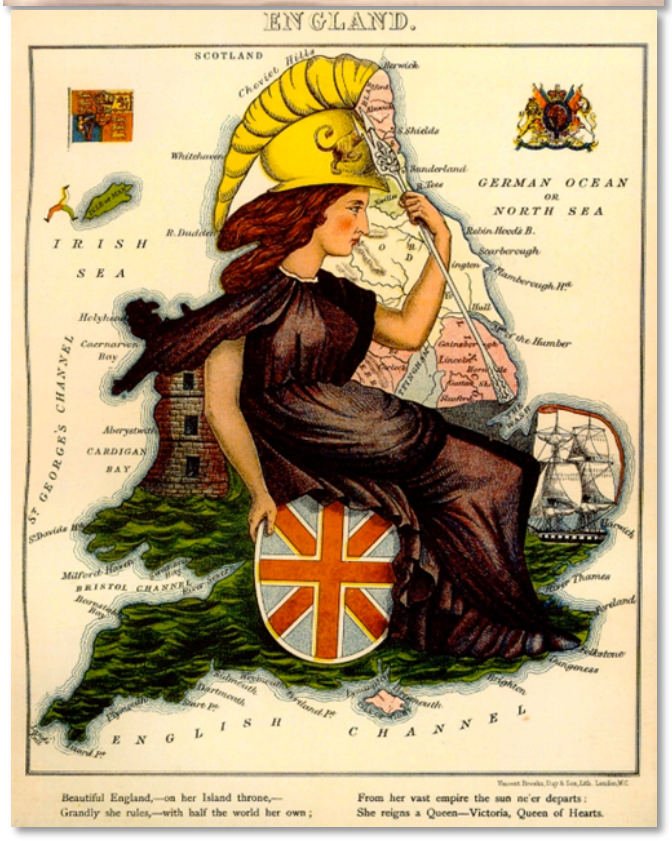
5.20

Geography Bewitched or, a Droll Caricature Map of Scotland, designed by Robert Dighton; published in London by Bowles & Carver in 1793

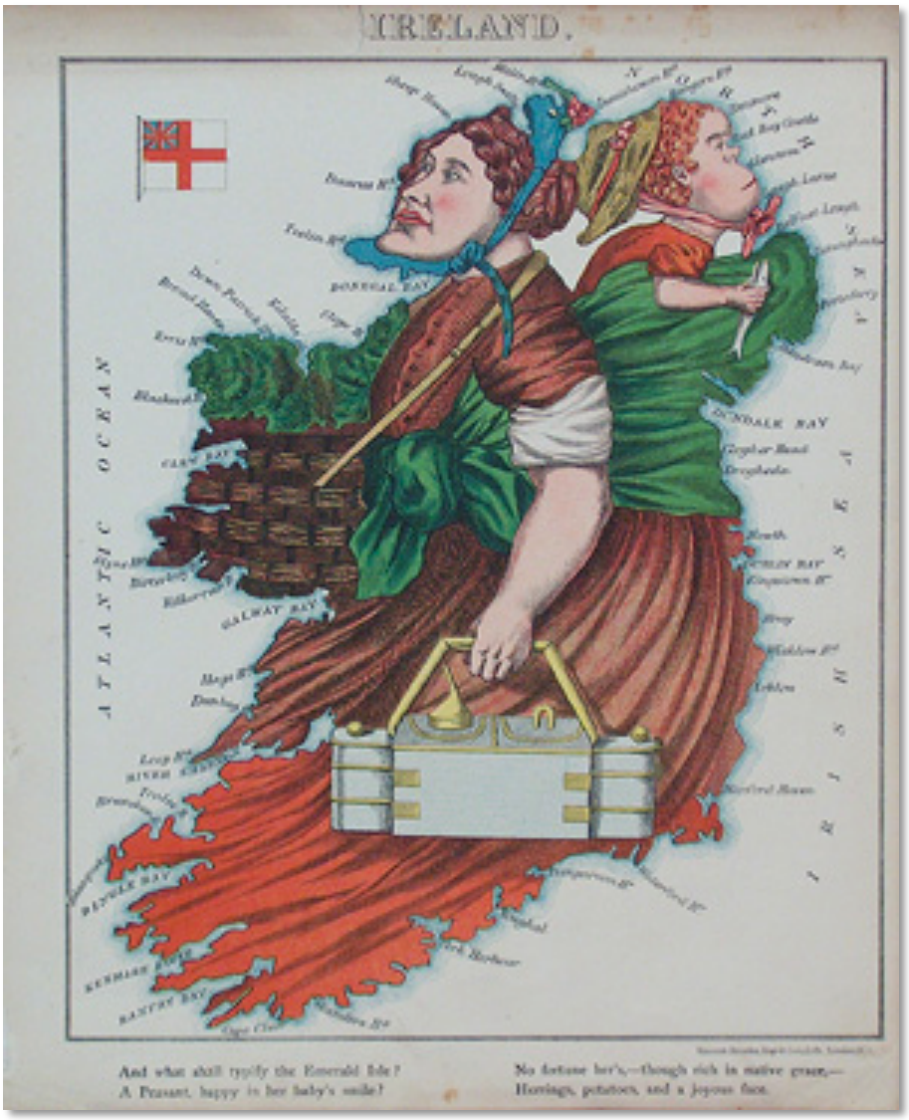
Johnny Bull on a Whale: Geography Bewitched or, a Droll Caricature Map of England and Wales, 1793,

St Patrick in Ireland, 19th century


WALES.
IRISH SEA
ST GEORGE'S CHANNEL
CARDIGAN BAY
BRISTOL CHANNEL
Geography bewitch'd—Owen Glendowr,
In Bardic grandeur, looks from shore to shore,
And sings King Arthur's long, long pedigree,
And cheese and leeks, and knights of high degree.


ENGLAND.
SCOTLAND
Cheviot Hills
Berwick
Whitehaven
Sunderland
GERMAN OCEAN
OR
NORTH SEA
IRISH
SEA
Robin Hood's B.
Scarborough
Flamborough Hd.
Mouth of the Humber
Holyhead
Caernarvon Bay
Aberystwith
CARDIGAN BAY
ST GEORGE'S CHANNEL
Milford Haven
BRISTOL CHANNEL
River Thames
Portland
Dartmouth
ENGLISH CHANNEL
Beautiful England,—on her Island throne,—
Grandly she rules,—with half the world her own;
From her vast empire the sun ne'er departs:
She reigns a Queen—Victoria, Queen of Hearts.

5.20


IRELAND.
ATLANTIC OCEAN
DUNDALK BAY
GALWAY BAY
And what shall typify the Emerald Isle?
A Peasant, happy in her baby's smile!
No fortune her's,—though rich in native grace,—
Herrings, potatoes, and a joyous face.

5.20


SCOTLAND.
PENTLAND FRITH
Cape Wrath
Duncansby Hd
Sinclair B.
Noss Hd
WESTERN ISLES
THE MINCH
LITTLE MINCH
Dornoch Frith
MORAY FRITH
Fraserburgh
Aberdeen
Stonehaven
Montrose
Frith of Tay
FRITH OF FORTH
N Berwick
Dunbar
St Abbs Hd
Berwick on Tweed
Iona
Ayr
Cheviot Hills
SOLWAY FRITH
Wigton Bay
Luce Bay
IRELAND
ENGLAND
A gallant piper, struggling through the bogs,
His wind bag broken, wearing his clay clogs;
Yet, strong of heart, a fitting emblem makes
For Scotland—land of heroes and of cakes.

The Overthrow of his Imperial Majesty King Jingo I. A Map of the Political Situation in 1880 by Nemesis (liberal activist Alfred F. Robbins)

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